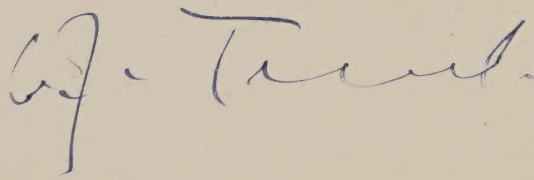
POPULAR AMUSEMENTS

RICHARD HENRY EDWARDS



STUDIES IN AMERICAN SOCIAL CONDITIONS—8

POPULAR AMUSEMENTS

BY

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To
THE PURE SPIRIT OF PLAY
IN THE HEART OF A LITTLE GIRL
To
ELIZABETH
1910—1912

INTRODUCTION

The three master forces fixing the mundane welfare of human beings are Work, Living Conditions, and Recreation. Students of society learned to appreciate the first two of these before they noticed the third. They were aroused as to the labor problem and the housing problem before they became concerned over the manner of use of leisure time. Mr. Edwards has realized the strategic importance of this last factor, and in this monograph has given us the most comprehensive and searching survey of the tendencies and problems of public recreation that has come to my notice.

The labor question leads into the thick of class struggle. One learns to balance the claims and interests of contending groups. The issues raised are not easy to settle in terms of the soul's health of the individual. Those who bring to the great debate nothing but ethical considerations do not get very far or command much confidence. In the settlement of labor problems, such matters as risk and fatigue, efficiency and economy, bulk large.

The recreation problem, on the other hand, does not precipitate us into the class struggle. The conflict is not so much between groups as between warring sides of human nature—appetite and will, impulse and reason, inclination and ideal. Here, if anywhere, is the place for ethical considerations. The disposition of leisure time

is preeminently a conscience matter. A youth submits perforce to the conditions of his work, but he chooses his recreations in freedom. To acquaint young people with the good or ill effects of the different varieties of recreation upon the higher self is the surest way to wean them from that which is frivolous and debasing.

This sociological study is profoundly moral. It is true that the author invites the individual to study, not his own use of leisure time but the problems of public recreation. But, while pondering on the obstacles in the way of community advancement, he is sure to do some hard thinking about his own habits and choices. The author's strategy is in line with the modern ideal of social service instead of individualistic salvation. The individual saves his own soul while helping his fellows to save theirs. While Mr. Edwards' contribution has the objectivity and the scholarship of a scientific work, it will be found that in reaction upon the student it has much in common with masterpieces of moral inspiration.

EDWARD ALSWORTH ROSS,
Professor of Sociology, University of Wisconsin.

PREFACE

This book is part of a series of "Studies in American Social Conditions," which are published in the interest of a systematic consideration of social questions by groups of citizens.[1]

It is everywhere agreed that enough reliable information about our social problems has been amassed to demand the serious attention of all thoughtful men and women. It is evident also that many hopeful efforts to solve these problems are being made by groups of people following various plans of action. The service which this series of studies would render is to aid in spreading the knowledge of facts, and to increase acquaintance with proposed solutions.

These studies are especially prepared for use by "Community Interest Groups." The plan of organizing such groups is a definite effort to aid in the formation of public opinion and the stimulation of action which will be effective in community betterment. The plan is simple and tested. The suggestion is that groups of men and women, or either alone, shall regularly meet to study, as citizens, the facts of this and other social problems; that they candidly discuss those facts and the proposed solutions; and then take individual or united action toward solving the problems acute in their own community.

[1] This series embraces the following studies now in print: "The Liquor Problem," "The Labor Problem," "Poverty," "Concentrated Wealth," "Business Morals" and "Popular Amusements." These are sold at 12 cents each for all except "Popular Amusements," which is $1.00. Orders should be sent to Association Press, 124 East 28th Street, New York City.

A group may be formed anywhere without formalities, through the mutual desire of a few people, the choice of a leader and agreement as to time and place of meeting. An account of such a group under the title, "The Social Problems Group," will be found in *Charities and the Commons* (now *The Survey*) for October 17, 1908.

For suggestions upon The Discussion Group Meeting and the Group Leader, see page 231. For A Suggested Order for the Use of This Study by Discussion Groups, see page 234. For Further Suggestions for the Use of This Study, see page 236.

Grateful acknowledgment is here made to Professor Edward Alsworth Ross for many suggestions in the preparation of this study; to Mary Imogene Hazeltine, preceptor of the Wisconsin Library School, and to Emma B. Skinner, class of 1910, for assistance on the bibliography; to Professor Graham Taylor of the Chicago School of Civics, Professor Charles R. Henderson of the University of Chicago, Lee F. Hanmer, director of the Department of Recreation of the Russell Sage Foundation, J. C. Boyers of the Playground and Recreation Association, Arthur H. Gleason, Journalist, and to Anna Camp Edwards, all of whom have made valued suggestions after reading the manuscript.

Especial acknowledgment is made to George J. Kneeland, author of "Commercialized Prostitution in New York City," for confidential information upon the overlapping of the vice problem and that of popular amusements. Especial acknowledgment is also made to Dean Louis E. Reber of the Extension Division of the University of Wisconsin, whose kindness has made possible the printing of this book in its present form following its publication as an Extension Division bulletin.

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PART I

THE PROBLEM OF POPULAR AMUSEMENTS

CHAPTER I

THE AMUSEMENT SITUATION IN GENERAL

"It is as if we ignored a wistful, over-confident creature who walked through our city streets calling out, 'I am the spirit of youth! With me all things are possible.'" JANE ADDAMS.

We are to study together the amusements of the American people. We are to pay especial attention to their extent, their characteristics, and the moral influence which they exert. We are to study them critically but constructively. We seek no repression of the instinct of play, but the full and rich development of that instinct through forms of expression which are not dominated by commercialism or tainted by immorality. We are to study the situation as a national problem, but not at a distance. "Our town" is to be at the focus of interest, and conditions elsewhere will interest us as they are like or unlike our own. We are to listen to "the voice of the towns, the little aggregations where the sinew of the nation grows, rather than of the metropolis."

What is the amusement situation in America today? What are the people in "our town" actually doing for their recreation? Where do they go for their fun? Not merely the little group of those who are known to any one individual, but the bulk of the people throughout the

town—where are they on Saturday and Sunday nights, and holidays? What are the conditions which obtain where they go? What are the influences which surround them there? Has the play impulse in "our town" been coined at a nickel a thrill, a quarter for a real sensation? Have our schools and homes, our libraries and churches left the instinct of play to be exploited by those who seek profits only?

A Typical Town Situation

The situation is vividly illustrated by one who found himself one summer evening in the center of what we may call a typical American town, and

"On a brightly-lighted street thronged with summer girls, school-boys, children, country folks and working people. But there was something strange about this street. It seemed to have only one side; and the people's faces were turned one way. The side to which the people flocked was light; the other side was, comparatively speaking, dark. The visitor crossed from the bright to the dark side, and discovered there, dimly illuminated by an occasional flickering lamp, interspersed with comfortable homes, stretching in dull array—the very institutions of Civilization itself. . . .

"Here was the library, spacious and solid . . . I read a card, also, affixed to the spiked gateway fortifying the heavy doors: 'This Library closed at 5 p. m. during July, August and September.' It is closed Sundays, holidays and Saturday afternoons. Beyond the library was the high school, substantially built, designed to endure for many years. . . . Yet this great agent of civilization, the measure by which western nations tell off their progress, seemed lazy and indifferent: I could use it in no other way except to sit on its steps and watch life on the other side of the way—and the steps were dusty. Its inhospitable air hurried me on to a cozy dwelling under elm trees. . . .

"But as I paused a policeman crossed the street, closed the

gate, tried the catch, and looked at me as if to say 'How came that gate open?' . . . I learned that the house was once the home and is now the memorial of a famous poet. Summer travelers make a point of visiting it, the policeman said, and it would be worth my while to stay over to see the great man's cradle and his grandfather's clock. I could not stay over, I objected, whereupon he replied severely that it was worth patronizing, if only for the sake of the public-spirited committee of leading ladies who opened it daily from two to five. . . . 'That,' he said more affably, 'is the Old First Church, built in 1798, and the statue in front is of its great minister, who preached from 1800 to 1850.' 'Have you a good man now?' I asked idly. 'Fair,' he replied, 'but the church is closed during the summer, you know.'

To that "other side" the visitor next turned:

"It was festooned with lights and cheap decorations meant only for fair weather; the doors of shops stood wide open, and sodawater fountains were crowded with boys and girls; there were fruit and nut stands, popcorn wagons decorated with flags, ice cream parlors with every table filled, and people waiting their turn over by the candy counters; besides penny shows and the gay vestibules of nickel theaters. Opposite the barren school yard was the arcaded entrance to the Nickelodeon, finished in white stucco, with the ticket-seller throned in a chariot drawn by an elephant trimmed with red, white, and blue lights. A phonograph was going over and over its lingo, and a few picture machines were free to the absorbed crowd which circulated through the arcade as through the street. Here were groups of working girls—now happy 'summer girls,' because they had left the grime, ugliness and dejection of their factories behind them, and were freshened and revived by doing what they like to do. . . ."[1]

If this is a fair picture of a typical American town, it gives a clue to the issues before us, for it raises questions

[1] S. N. Patten, *Current Literature*, v. 49, p. 185-188, August, 1909. Quoted from the author's "Product and Climax."

that challenge every institution established by society for the protection and guidance of young people.

The Extent of Commercial Amusements

No reliable figures are in existence covering the extent of commercial amusements in America as a whole, but recreation surveys have been made in several cities where they are prevalent, notably in Milwaukee, Detroit, Kansas City, and San Francisco. These surveys indicate that amusement enterprises have captured the leisure time and attention of all classes. In Kansas City, for example, with a population of 248,381, the annual attendance at commercial recreations is estimated at 41,062,808, and the annual expenditure $6,010,037.48. In San Francisco, having a population of 416,912, the theaters and motion-picture houses, "with a total weekly capacity of almost 2,000,000, an estimated weekly attendance of over half a million, and an estimated expenditure by patrons of over $100,000 per week, . . . are entitled to serious attention." In New York City, with a population of 4,766,883, a careful estimate indicates that "one thousand motion picture shows are collecting over twelve million dollars a year from the people." "Nearly six hundred dance halls are running on a basis of profit." [1]

So popular, indeed, have commercial amusements become that their patronage may be said to be universal. One has only to watch the night life of any city as it moves in and out past the box offices to see young, middle-aged, and old men, women, and children, of every occupation and station in life, all intent on finding "a good time." Sooner or later the whole city turns out. Amuse-

[1] "The City Where Crime is Play," p. 30.

ment enterprises have indeed become a vast business interest, involving enormous investments of capital, occupying much valuable property in the heart of the cities, and receiving huge sums from the earnings of all classes of citizens. Their field of operations extends to every place where a venture can be expected to pay. The ability of so many fake enterprises to make money indicates the openness and gullibility of the public mind, and emphasizes also the dearth of wholesome and attractive offerings.

Characteristics

The characteristics of public amusements must be studied type by type. They are too varied for general statement, though they may be roughly classified as dramatic, sociable, and athletic, with the addition of certain special places and special events. Their variety itself is significant of the amounts of money expended upon them and the intensity of popular desire to hear or see some new thing. Ingenious appeal is made to curiosity and the love of spectacle, to sociability, appetite and thirst, to sex excitement, antagonism, and many other human desires. Spectacular offerings have been sought out in the remotest corners of the globe and made to yield their brief moment of stimulation to the ever shifting multitude. Some thriller is provided for every pleasurable sensation known to man.

Morals

It is important to recognize that amusements may be good or bad, independent of commercial management, and also that commercial management is apparently nec-

essary and valuable in great portions of the amusement field. Yet it is equally important to ask if the amusement situation is not now widely dominated by a type of commercial management which has no regard for art, spontaneity, or the basic demands of morality. Miss Addams goes so far as to write:

"Since the soldiers of Cromwell shut up the people's playhouses and destroyed their pleasure fields, the Anglo-Saxon city has turned over the provision for public recreation to the most evil-minded and the most unscrupulous members of the community. . . ." [1]

It has been demonstrated in the recent reports of vice investigations in large cities, such as New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, that commercial amusement enterprises line both sides of the broad way that leads to the underworld. The Philadelphia Vice Report, for example, declares that:

"Many public dance halls, moving picture shows, and other amusement centers are breeding-places of vice—the rendezvous of men who entrap girls and of girls who solicit men. Veritable orgies are described as transpiring in some of the clubs. The proprietors of these places are known to abet these vicious practices, and, in many cases, to derive large revenue from them." [2]

The Chicago Vice Report says:

"The investigation of dance halls, cheap theaters, amusement parks, and lake steamers, shows that these places are surrounded by vicious dangers which result in sending many young girls into lives of immorality." [3]

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[1] Jane Addams, "The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets," p. 7.
[2] "Report of the Vice Commission of Philadelphia," p. 21.
[3] "The Social Evil in Chicago," p. 246.

Great sections of the amusement problem are found, in fact, to overlap the vice problem, and to form one great series of exploitations by which the vicious and criminal prey upon the innocent, prostituting the natural instinct of pleasure, and degrading vast numbers of young people into the life of shame—"confusing joy with lust and gaiety with debauchery."

Julia Schoenfeld summarizes her impressions of an investigation of New York conditions as follows:

"It was discouraging after many weeks of going about to see the same characteristics, the same pitfalls, the same snares for all. Young girls do not willingly walk into danger. Girls are everywhere and danger lurks everywhere. Girls from good homes, girls who live in boarding houses, girls from the tenements, girls who must content themselves in hall bedrooms, girls of all ages, all in the mad pursuit of pleasure, running headlong into danger, having their moral senses blunted—all because the people of New York are willing to let any kind of amusement exist under any condition, are willing to sit by and let politicians graft. By their very indifference to public welfare they are helping along the great curse that is besetting the American public today—the Social Evil."[1]

A significant chart of moral values is presented in the Kansas City Survey of Commercial Recreation, by Fred F. McClure.

"After noting the maturity and impressionability of the attendants at various kinds of commercial amusements, and listing carefully the objectionable features of each kind, the following rating of the different kinds of amusements in proportion to their moral worth is submitted as representing an opinion based on very careful study:

[1] From an unpublished report on amusement resorts by Julia Schoenfeld.

Motion picture shows	79	per	cent	good
Theaters	72	"	"	"
Dance halls	23.1	"	"	"
River excursion boats	7.7	"	"	"
Pool halls	46.2	"	"	"
Skating rinks	74.1	"	"	"
Penny arcades	38.5	"	"	"
Shows—"Men only"	0	"	"	"
Shooting galleries	84.7	"	"	"
Bowling alleys	77.1	"	"	"
Amusement parks	71.1	"	"	"

"Medical museums, social clubs, wine gardens, chop-suey restaurants, and saloons are not graded. They would undoubterly lower the average of good, wholesome recreation. The totals show wholesome amusement 68 per cent, bad 32 per cent. The 32 per cent consists of intemperance, obscenity, suggestions of crime, dissipation, late hours, representing an expenditure of $1,923,211.99."[1]

Among the many influences at work today in shaping the actual morality of young people, none is more immediate, more puzzling, or more significant than the influence of their amusement life. The Recreation Survey of Montclair, N. J., for example, shows that "by analysis of cases, two-thirds of the juvenile delinquency in Montclair has been traced to faulty recreative conditions." We shall give the moral issues involved in the problem a large consideration throughout our study.

Causes

What are the deep, underlying causes of the amusement situation in America today? Why is enthusiasm for wholesome recreation not universal? Why are the suggestive play and the sensual dance so alluring? Has

[1] "Recreation Survey of Kansas City," p. 73.

human nature begun to break down in the face of the unrestrained commercialism in amusements? Why has the love of spontaneous play given way so largely to the love of merely being amused? Why is it that "a considerable section of our people are poor in play and rich in vice?" Why do we forget that "recreation is stronger than vice, and that recreation alone can stifle the lust for vice?" We will be meditating upon such questions as these while we pursue our study.

What relation have working conditions in America to the amusement spirit? Do the industries in "our town" over-speed and under-pay working men and women to the point at which excess is the logical reaction and sensational excitements are sought to stir the blood that is infected with the toxin of fatigue? Professor Walter Rauschenbusch says:

"The long hours and the high speed and pressure of industry use up the vitality of all except the most capable. An exhausted body craves rest, change and stimulus, but it responds only to coarse and strong stimulation. In all mill towns where the long work day is the rule, the night school, library, and church languish, and the saloon and house of prostitution flourish. Drink and sexual vice are the ready pillows of an exhausted body, the only form of play which degradation knows."[1]

He further characterizes the work of thousands of American working men and women as follows:

"At the end of the day they have taken so many thousand stitches in so many shirts; or they have sewed on a gross of buttons; or a bolt of cloth has gone through their hands; that is the beginning of it and the end of it for them, and it has no further bearing upon them than as a growing sum of losses of

[1] Walter Rauschenbusch, "Christianizing the Social Order," p. 249.

vitality, of ambition and imagination. . . . This is the condition in which thoughtful workingmen feel they are placed. They believe that they produce enough to give them a margin of leisure for real life, but one extra hour of toil, one dollar taken from their wage, a little additional speeding of the work, wipes out that margin of time and vitality which makes their life free and livable. That margin is God's country in their life, the soil where all the higher instincts and desires are cultivated. Wipe that out, and you leave the brute needs. Their resentment is deepened by the knowledge that the extra strength taken from them is often turned to useless luxury by those who take it. An additional vase or rug in a wealthy woman's drawing room may add nothing to the real comfort of any one; yet it may embody the excess toil of a thousand girls for a week. If each girl had been able to retain that additional fragment of earnings it might have meant an excursion on Saturday, a concert, some article of womanly adornment, a present to a friend, something to give the feel and joy of life. Instead it is bottled up in that vase to which a few satiated ladies may say 'Ah!'"

Is the work of great numbers of girls at the most play-loving period of life so unsuited to them, so mechanical and exhausting that they are quite naturally feverish for excitement at night and ready to take up with anyone who can "show them a good time"?

What relation have living conditions in many sections of many cities to the amusement situation? Is it because these conditions are so congested and noisy, so unbearably squalid and lacking in all ministration to the sense of the beautiful, that great multitudes roam the streets ready for any welcome which carries with it light and cheer and diversion? How many working girls join the throng merely because the lonely hall-bedroom is their only home? Do not young men have emotional reactions, too?

"'Looping the loop,' amid shrieks of simulated terror, or dancing in disorderly saloon halls, are, perhaps, the natural reactions to a day spent in noisy factories and in trolley cars whirling through the distracting streets, but the city which permits them to be the acme of pleasure and recreation to its young people commits a grievous mistake."[1]

Are we awake to the meaning of youth? Do we understand the spirit of youth and enrich it, or do we merely repress it with heavy hand until it is sadly broken, or until it breaks away from all control and guidance to seek expression in the exploiter's house? Is not Miss Addams at the core of the question when she says of the spirit of youth:

"We may cultivate this most precious possession, or we may disregard it. We may listen to the young voices rising clear above the roar of industrialism and the prudent councils of commerce, or we may become hypnotized by the sudden new emphasis placed upon wealth and power and forget the supremacy of spiritual forces in men's affairs. *It is as if we ignored a wistful, over-confident creature who walked through our city streets calling out, 'I am the Spirit of Youth! With me, all things are possible!'* We fail to understand what he wants or even to see his doings, although his acts are pregnant with meaning and we may either translate them into a sordid chronicle of petty vice or turn them into a solemn school for civic righteousness."[2]

The Problem and Our Approach to It

The amusement problem is a universal problem, for everybody plays at something. Coney Island and the Mardi Gras are only glittering exponents of a national passion. No one who has been at a baseball game or a picture show, at a circus or the vaudeville, at a country

[1] Jane Addams, "The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets," p. 69.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

fair or among the children on a city street, can doubt that all America believes in amusement. The important question is *the sort of amusement* in which she believes, for the sort of play on which her attention is focused fashions the national character. The relaxations to which industrial and living conditions limit the people inevitably mould their morals.

The amusements which prevail among the people surround them with their atmosphere as with a garment. It may be an atmosphere of ozone or of noxious gases. What amusements recreate the spirit of man? What stifle, depress, and degrade him?

The purpose of our study is to find the answer to these questions, to examine the five great groups of amusements in America today—dramatic, social rendezvous, athletic, special places, and special events. We frankly study them as constituting a social problem and take for granted in many of them a large percentage of good upon which our search for aggravated conditions will leave us little time to dwell. At the same time we shall attempt, without overstatement, to form a sound judgment of conditions as they exist in America today. We shall pass from the study of the problem, to an examination of the leading movements which point the way to its solution, in order that action in "our town" may be based upon the successful experience of other communities.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion [1]

1. The purpose of this hour is to see that everyone is interested in the situation, and to recognize that amusements in

[1] Suggestions for an outline of study and discussion covering the work as a whole are given on page 231.

America have become a serious matter. Make clear how this question affects every home in the land; that the amusement business is highly organized and commercialized, and that many evils find in it a comfortable nest in which to hatch their young. These facts are to be studied.

2. Discuss the importance of play. Can it be safely dispensed with in a busy life? Is the man who boasts that he hasn't taken a vacation in twenty years to be applauded, or is he a sinner against youth and society? The importance of play will be fully discussed under the solutions of the problem, but touch upon it here.

3. Discuss briefly the proper relation of work to play, of monotonous mechanical labor and long hours of confinement to excesses in alcoholic liquor and vicious amusements.

4. Let the members of the group state, without referring to the outline, the most popular forms of recreation as they have observed them in "our town." They may have some to add to those in this study. Where people are present who have lived in various parts of the country they should present briefly the amusement situation as they have observed it.

5. Discuss the local situation with reference to immoral influences. Someone may have a story of evil conditions to tell. Jot down this story and prove later by investigation whether it presents a fair picture of conditions.

6. Are amusements in general, and especially vicious amusements, demanded to the extent which their present provision in many towns would imply, or has the business of providing amusement over-stocked the market and created an unnatural demand for excitement?

7. What is the effect upon the moral sensibilities when spectators watch performers take hazardous risks in entertaining the crowd?

8. Of what significance is it that people work in a wide variety of forms of labor, that the modern specialization of tasks within those forms of labor gives each worker a different work life from that of all but a few of his fellows? Thus labor has come to be a diversifier of experience. Do not the people still find their pleasures, however, in comparatively few ways? Have the most popular forms of amusement thus be-

come remarkable unifiers of experience? What extraordinary significance does this fact lend to the artistic and moral character of the most popular forms of amusement?

9. The attention of each person to whom a topic is assigned should be called to the fact that three points of interest should be met by his presentation—Extent, Characteristics, and Moral Influence. Note this threefold division in each chapter of the text dealing with the problem.

10. The group will discover the limits which have been set by the author at different points as boundaries and divisions of the problem. They should recognize from the beginning that matters which do not bear directly upon the immediate subject should not be introduced. The leader will do well to limit the discussion at each meeting strictly to the topic in hand or to points which have been made in previous meetings.

11. For further material upon the amusement situation in general, see pages 147, 163, and 221.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[The book and periodical references which follow under each heading are a selected list intended for popular use. Many references cover related subjects in addition to the one under which they are listed. Book references should be kept up to date by consulting the *Book Review Digest,* and the *A. L. A. Booklist.* New magazine articles are listed in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.* These may be found at any public library. There are a number of magazines especially devoted to different phases of amusement which have not been listed. They may well be consulted for side lights on the problem.]

Books

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A mature statement of the problem of public recreation in American city life.

Bliss, W. D. P. ed. "New Encyclopedia of Social Reform." Funk, 1908. $7.50.
Contains articles on many phases of the problem.

"Britannica Year Book 1913." The Encyclopedia Britannica Company, New York City, 1913. $2.25. See articles on sports and games, pp. 445-471; sport in the United States, pp. 472-474.

Valuable résumé of conditions in various sports. Reference is made to articles in the eleventh edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica which should also be freely consulted on all phases of the problem.

Chicago Vice Commission. "The Social Evil in Chicago." Chicago Vice Commission, 1911. Republished by the Vice Commission of Chicago, Inc., for distribution by the American Vigilance Association, 105 West Monroe St. Distributed to responsible persons who send 50c. in stamps to cover cost.

This report lays bare some of the prevalent amusements of Chicago on their worst sides.

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An illustrated magazine representing the highest standards in social work. Indispensable to all who are interested in the solution of this and kindred problems.

CHAPTER II

THE DRAMATIC GROUP OF AMUSEMENTS

The first group of amusements to be studied is the dramatic group. Under this general head may be classified: serious drama, melodrama, musical comedy, farce and burlesque, vaudeville, motion pictures, and a few others. They all have this in common, that they involve some sort of dramatic representation before an audience. Attention is invited to the scene presented, and with them all "the play's the thing."

Extent

The numbers of playhouses, the total attendances and moneys invested or expended in dramatic amusement offerings the country over can be estimated only in a most general way, if at all.

The New York *Times* in an article entitled "Fortunes for Entertainments," is authority for the following statements:

"It is estimated in round figures that the American public pays between twenty-five and thirty millions of dollars annually for theatrical amusements. The enterprise which is responsible for this enormous expenditure represents an invested capital of more than four times this amount of money. At least

$120,000,000 is represented in theatrical investments in the United States."

A list of the principal cities with the number of theaters included in each is given (obviously excluding motion picture houses) with the following conclusion:

"Compile these figures and there is an aggregate of 2,973 theaters which get regular bookings. A conservative estimate of theaters of all kinds in the United States, large and small, would be 3,000."

Computations of costs are then given and lead to this conclusion:

"We arrive at an approximate grand total of $45,000,000 invested in theater properties. This sum represents only the one item of permanent investment. An expenditure of double this amount is necessary to run the theaters."[1]

The following more careful estimates from recreation surveys indicate something of the popularity of dramatic amusements in various cities.

Milwaukee, a city of 373,857 population, is reported to have sixty-two playhouses, with a total capacity of 42,232, and an average weekly attendance of 349,673.

The Recreation Survey of Milwaukee indicates that:

"Between eight and nine o'clock on either Saturday or Sunday evenings all the theaters are open, vaudeville houses are in the middle of their first evening performances, and the moving picture shows are getting the largest percentage of their attendance. At this hour it is safe to say 37,875 people are in attendance at some performance of this kind at one time. This emphasizes two things: First, the popular hour for social entertainment; and second, the very considerable part played in the recreation life of the city by this type of amusements."

[1] New York *Times*, Sept. 7, 1913, part 7, p. 1.

Detroit, a city of 465,756 population, is estimated in its Recreation Survey to have:

> "In all the theaters and moving picture houses . . . a total average weekly attendance of 547,409, seventy-three per cent of which is in the moving picture houses, . . . a number equal to the entire population of the city of Detroit."

Kansas City, in its Recreation Survey, is estimated to have an average weekly attendance of 554,064 at theaters and motion picture houses, the average at motion picture shows alone being 449,064, or almost twice the population of the city. It is noteworthy that Kansas City shows one-half or more of those attending various forms of dramatic amusement to be between 15 and 25 years of age.

Providence, a city of 224,326 population, is estimated to have an average weekly attendance of young people under 25 years of age at moving pictures and theaters of 43,500, nearly three times the number attending any other form of indoor amusement.

Richmond, Va., a city of 127,628 population, in May, 1912, according to its Recreation Survey, showed an attendance at theaters and motion picture shows equal to about half the population of the city.

Similarly Indianapolis in January-March, 1914, with a population now estimated at 265,000, showed an estimated attendance at dramatic amusements of 420,780, of which 320,527 was at motion pictures.

The study of the characteristics and morals of dramatic amusements should be made in connection with each type in the following chapters. The following characterization from San Francisco is in some respects typical of the moral issue.

"We find throughout all the theaters, from burlesque to legitimate, a clearly perceptible factor of sensuousness and vulgarity. The people blame the management, but they go. The management admits the vulgarity but pleads the demand of the people. This demand cannot be denied. When we find musical comedy playing to thirty-two per cent of the capacity of all the standard houses, it is not a whim of the management. But we also find the management not only supplies the demand, it stimulates and helps to increase it. It plays down even more than is necessary from the box-office."[1]

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. The size of the show-going public in each town is important to determine. A member of the group should report a careful estimate. A method for the determination of this total in the larger cities will be found in the Detroit, Indianapolis, or other recreation surveys.

2. What conclusions as to the significance of dramatic amusements do you draw from the fact that the theaters continue to play to large audiences in times of financial depression? How do you account for this?

3. It should be noted that each general subject, such as, The Dramatic Group, is treated in four different places, i. e., under:

a. The Problem (as here).

b. Restrictive Public Opinion (page 147 and following).

c. Constructive Public Opinion (page 163 and following).

d. Suggestions for Community Action (page 221 and following).

Cross references are given under each section of the problem to the pages where the other sections may be found. Further material upon the dramatic group will be found upon pages 149, 169, and 225.

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[1] "Transactions of the Commonwealth Club of California," *Public Recreation*, p. 246.

1. SERIOUS DRAMA

Extent

Serious drama has come to receive a surprisingly small percentage of the actual attendance of the show-going public. Of the sixty-two playhouses in Milwaukee, only three are devoted to drama as "legitimate" theaters, and they reach only 6.3 per cent of the show-going public. The Kansas City Survey shows similarly that serious drama in that city reaches only 5.1 per cent of the show-going public. The corresponding figure for Detroit is 5.2 per cent, and for San Francisco 6 per cent. The influence of serious drama in the national life, however, is much greater than these figures would indicate, for the educational value of good plays carries far, and the standards of serious drama affect other phases of dramatic production.

Characteristics

Serious drama, defined as "a sincere portrayal of life by imitation in action," answers as a fine art to a persistent human interest, an interest in the meaning of the human story with its varied motives, characters and conditions. It has a dignity and quality which none of the other amusement features of this group possess, for it depends upon a play which is a representation of life, upon actors who possess some measure of artistic skill, and upon an audience which has at least some degree of serious interest.

The purpose of drama is primarily to give recreation in the full sense of the word, and it achieves its purpose in either tragedy or comedy by the effective substitution

of the world of imagination presented on the stage for the matter-of-fact worlds in which the members of the audience live. It releases them in flight beyond the stern borders to which life has brought them, and thrills them with some bit of the human story which might be their own.

There is much discussion concerning the degree to which serious drama is and should be educational. Do the motives pictured in the world of the stage operate in the work-a-day worlds of the audience? Should the playwright seek to educate by developing in his work a clear message? Viewpoints vary widely on these questions, but it is clear that drama may have a profoundly educational effect. In the modern social drama

> ". . . the individual is displayed in conflict with his environment and the drama deals with the mighty war between personal character and social conditions. The Greek hero struggles with the superhuman; the Elizabethan hero struggles with himself; the modern hero struggles with the world." "The relation between the one and the many, in politics, in religion, in the daily round of life itself has been and still is the most important topic of our times."[1]

This relation is the subject matter of the modern social drama, reflecting the social interest of the times. The social outcast of any sort, and the unconventional person become, therefore, highly dramatic material.

Morals

The morality of serious modern drama is widely discussed. It is indisputable that dramatic representations may have a positive moral influence of the first or-

[1] Clayton Hamilton, "Theory of the Theater," p. 137.

der. Serious drama, as we know it, was born within the church in the miracle plays, and has often served the cause of morality in the highest degree. It is manifest, on the other hand, that it can exercise a profoundly immoral influence, and has often done so. No generalization on the moral influence of the drama as a whole is of any value. Discriminating criticism is needed to establish the truth in each instance. Furthermore, serious drama in America varies so widely as to moral tone, and there are so many conceptions of what it is that makes a play "immoral," that no wholesale generalization on the morality of the serious drama as it is in America today avails anything. Here also discriminating criticism is necessary.

What makes a play immoral? Is it the subject matter which the dramatist presents, the treatment of the subject matter by the dramatist, or the presentation of the play by the manager and actors? May or may not immorality be present in any one of the three? A leading dramatic critic writes:

"To either condemn or defend the morality of any work of art because of its material alone, is merely a waste of words. There is no such thing *per se* as an immoral subject for a play: in the treatment of the subject, and only in the treatment, lies the basis for an ethical judgment of the piece. . . . The only way in which a play may be immoral is for it to cloud, in the spectator, the consciousness of those invariable laws of life which say to man 'Thou shalt not;' or 'Thou shalt.' . . . The one thing needful in order that a drama may be moral is that the author shall maintain throughout the piece a sane and truthful insight into the soundness or unsoundness of the relation between his characters. He must know when they are right and when they are wrong, and must make clear to the audience the reasons for his judgments. . . . Whenever, then, it becomes important to determine whether a new play of the

modern social type is moral or immoral, the critic should decide first, whether the author tells lies specifically about any of the people in his story, and, second, provided that the playwright passes the first test successfully, whether he allures the audience to generalize falsely in regard to life at large from the specific circumstances of his play. These two questions are the only ones that need to be decided."[1]

Whether or not this statement covers the whole of the question, it is beyond doubt that this fundamental immorality of treatment exists in many of the plays presented as serious drama. A large proportion of the plays brought out each year, representing, as they do, that which is momentarily effective rather than that which is fundamentally true, are written with no sincere dramatic purpose. They portray the results of human action, not as those results work out in life, but as the playwright fancies to portray them for the sake of theatric effect. This means that there are many in which lies are told about the people in the story, and which by carelessness or intention lure the audience to generalize falsely in regard to life as a whole.

Prevalent discussion of the morals of modern drama exerts itself fully as much with the choice of subject matter as with the immoralities of treatment indicated above. Whether or no this is theoretically correct from the artist's viewpoint, there is widespread criticism of the "broadening license allowed to the drama of sexuality," the large presentation of sex relations, especially irregular relations—the life of the courtesan and the prostitute. Opinions vary widely on the issue whether this dramatic emphasis merely reflects or helps to create and intensify the acute and morbid sex consciousness of to-

[1] Clayton Hamilton, in his "Theory of the Theater," pp. 144, 148-9.

day. There are many who ask how it is possible to hold guiltless those dramatists who help to focus and hold public attention upon this type of subject matter. If the normal mind instinctively refuses to dwell long upon these subjects, is it not a fair demand of the normal public that other phases of life more wholesome and no less dramatic be chosen? May it not be that an increasing knowledge of the consequences of the prevalent sex stimulation in our theaters may alter the a priori generalization that "there is no such thing *per se* as an immoral subject for a play"? Might not an increasing appreciation of the physiological psychology of sex make the presentation of certain sex facts wholly valid exceptions to this principle? S. H. Adams, in discussing *Salome* as "a slightly disguised piece of abnormal sensuality," speaks to the point when he says: "This sort of thing can only be normal in a world made up of lecherous-minded people, a world in which such ideas and motives being natural to the mass are proper subjects for art." [1]

The essential principle set forth by G. K. Chesterton in discussing the criminal operation in *Waste* seems to get near the root of the truth, and to be capable of extension to no small amount of the subject matter of modern drama. He says:

"Here I think the whole argument might be sufficiently cleared up by saying that the objection to such things on the stage is a purely artistic objection. There is nothing wrong in talking about an illegal operation; there are plenty of occasions when it would be very wrong not to talk about it. But it may be easily just a shade too ugly for the shape of any work of art. There is nothing wrong about being sick; but if Ber-

[1] S. H. Adams, "Indecent Stage." *American Magazine*, May, 1909, v. 68, pp. 41-47.

nard Shaw wrote a play in which all the characters expressed their dislike of animal food by vomiting on the stage, I think we should be justified in saying that the thing was outside, not the laws of morality, but the framework of civilized literature. The instinctive movement of repulsion which everyone has when hearing of the operation in *Waste*, is not an ethical repulsion at all. But it is an esthetic repulsion, and a right one."[1]

Beyond this, however, the question of what is valid subject matter for drama apparently can not be answered solely upon artistic grounds, even though certain bodies of subject matter may be successfully ruled out on that basis.

Here, as elsewhere, we are coming into an increasing sense of the value of the social reference. Artistic dogmatism is as out of place here as moral dogmatism. The social consequences of any art, especially an art so purely social as drama, can no longer be ignored, for the voice of the common weal has, after all, the final right to be heard.

Hugo Muensterberg brings the social reference to bear upon "red light drama" in the following paragraphs of far-reaching truth:

"To strengthen this instinctive emotion of mysterious respect which makes the young mind shrink from brutal intrusion will remain the wisest policy as long as we cannot change that automatic mechanism of human nature by which the sexual thought stimulates the sexual organs.

"A nation which tries to lift its sexual morality by dragging the sexual problems to the street for the inspection of the crowd without shyness and without shame, and which wilfully makes them objects of gossip and stage entertainment, is doing worse than Munchausen when he tried to lift himself by his scalp.

"It seems less important that the youth learn the secrets of

[1] G. K. Chesterton, "George Bernard Shaw," pp. 140-141.

sexual intercourse than that their teachers and guardians learn the elements of physiological psychology." [1]

John Galsworthy puts positively that quality of life which many lovers of art desire to see enter more largely into the making of our modern drama, when he says:

"It is certain that to the making of good drama, as to the practice of every other art, there must be brought an almost passionate love of discipline, a white heat of self-respect, a desire to make the truest, fairest, best thing in one's power; and that to these must be added an eye that does not flinch. Such qualities alone will bring to a drama the selfless character which soaks it with inevitability." [2]

Jane Addams, in writing of the morals of the stage as a whole, emphasizes the intense significance of the question, and says with prophetic foresight:

"There is no doubt that we are at the beginning of a period when the stage is becoming the most successful popular teacher in public morals. Many times the perplexed hero reminds one of Emerson's description of Margaret Fuller, 'I do not know where I am going, follow me;' but nevertheless, the stage is dealing with these moral themes in which the public is interested. . . . While many young people and older ones as well go to the theater, if only to see represented and hear discussed the themes which seem to them so tragically important, there is no doubt that what they hear there, flimsy and poor as it often is, easily becomes their actual moral guide. In moments of moral crisis they turn to the sayings of the hero who found himself in a similar plight. The sayings may not be profound, but they are at least applicable to conduct. It would be a striking result if the teachings of the contemporaneous stage should at last afford the moral platform upon which the various members of the community would unite for common action in matters of social reform." [3]

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[1] "Hugo Muensterberg." New York *Times*, September 14, 1913, p. 4.
[2] John Galsworthy, "The Inn of Tranquillity," p. 192.
[3] Jane Addams in *The Survey*, April 3, 1909.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

Serious drama as we have it in America today raises many subjects for discussion:

1. Do all members of the group agree that drama is a fine art and has a large and legitimate place in human interest?

2. A member of the group should give a brief paper, distinguishing sharply between the characteristics of tragedy, comedy, farce, melodrama, burlesque, vaudeville, and motion pictures.

3. Has the modern social drama as we have seen it in "our town" done harm by its presentation of the socially outcast as its subject matter, or has more harm been done by the way in which these matters have been presented?

4. What is it that makes a play immoral? A member of the group should present a brief paper on this question. Ample references from all points of view will be found in the bibliography.

5. Discuss grand opera in its relations to the questions raised here.

6. Groups may well observe the moral atmosphere which surrounds and pervades the theater in their town. Is the theater well managed and the atmosphere wholesome? The manager might be invited to present the problems of the drama as he sees them from the business point of view.

7. The group should watch the effect of the theater upon those who attend habitually. To what degree does it seem to provide genuine recreation and happiness? Does it lead in cases of excessive attendance to a loss of good perspective on life, to extravagant expenditure, to theatrical poses, or other false attitudes?

8. In this discussion, the group should stick to the single topic of "legitimate" drama. The discussion of other phases of dramatic amusement should await their turn.

9. Further material upon serious drama will be found upon pages 149, 169, and 225.

2. MELODRAMA, MUSICAL COMEDY, FARCE, BURLESQUE

Alongside of serious drama go melodrama, musical comedy, farce, and burlesque. These have this in common, that they lack the serious artistic purpose of drama proper. The audiences at these productions are for the most part in frivolous mood.

Extent

Heavy inroads have been made in the last few years into all these types of plays, especially into stage productions of melodrama, by vaudeville and motion pictures. The Milwaukee Survey shows that the show-going public there gives an average weekly attendance of five per cent to melodrama, and 6.9 per cent to burlesque. The Detroit Survey shows 6.8 per cent at burlesque. Kansas City shows 3.5 per cent at melodrama, and 3.6 per cent at burlesque theaters. San Francisco shows 3.5 per cent at burlesque. It is probable that these percentages are an approximate representation of conditions in the country as a whole.

Characteristics

Melodrama, as presented on the stage, or as now largely in motion pictures, is the elemental dramatic expression for the mass of the people. It shows the common life of men in the grip of superior forces, caught in dramatic situations, and is especially significant for its wide appeal. Melodrama is like tragedy in this:

> "That each exhibits a set of characters struggling vainly to avert a predetermined doom; but in this essential point they

differ,—that whereas the characters in melodrama are drifted to disaster in spite of themselves, the characters in tragedy go down to destruction because of themselves. In tragedy the characters determine and control the play; in melodrama the plot determines and controls the characters.

"If we turn our attention to the merry-mooded drama, we shall discern a similar distinction between comedy and farce. A comedy is a humorous play in which the actors dominate the action; a farce is a humorous play in which the action dominates the actors."[1]

Comedy and farce on the American stage have degenerated, with rare exceptions, into cheap musical and variety shows of the extravaganza type. They are in no sense drama. They are for the most part well characterized as providing "music thin and chirpy, staging gorgeously vulgar—with no touch of poetry or imagination or reckless romance."

Burlesque, as its name implies, is a type of theatrical representation in which there are incongruous contrasts between the subject and the manner of treatment. It abounds in parody and grotesque caricatures. Its keynote is cynicism, and its appeal is to the lowest sense of humor. It descends to any degree of vulgarity necessary to get a laugh, and degenerates everywhere into a coarse buffoonery suited to the audience to which it caters.

Morals

The morals of melodrama seem always to be sound at heart, however crude and theatric the play may be. Is the villain not always done to death and the heroine rescued and vindicated? To many jaded theatergoers today,

[1] Clayton Hamilton, "Theory of the Theater," pp. 127-131.

the old-fashioned morals of melodrama seem like the lost virtues of their childhood, and it is a fact of deep significance that the morals of motion picture plays are for the most part the morals of melodrama.

Cheap musical comedies, gayety and burlesque shows ordinarily have as little morals of any sort as the law allows, and frequently less. It is here that immorality in dramatic amusements has its chief stronghold. They do an incalculable damage to public morality, for their basic appeal is directly to the sensual passions. They frequently reek with suggestive songs and dances, vulgar jokes, with vile double meanings, and spectacular effects which have no other appeal than to sensuality. "A vein of appalling vulgarity," says Israel Zangwill, "runs through most of our musical plays and farcical comedies." [1]

Burlesque in New York City has been classified as "five-sixths demoralizing and one-sixth lowering." It would be difficult to overestimate the moral damage done by suggestive "popular" songs which have their origin here, are easily memorized, and spread contagiously through all classes of society.

The audiences at these shows are for the most part fond of vulgarity and help to create the atmosphere in which it thrives. "They contain an unpleasantly large number of boys between sixteen and eighteen, plus a still larger contingent of young men."

Robb O. Bartholomew, in the Report of the Censorship of Motion Pictures in Cleveland, calls attention to "the appalling amount of harm the cheap vaudeville and burlesque shows are doing," and says:

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[1] *Cosmopolitan*, v. 38, April, 1914, p. 641.

"When one sees the hundreds of young men and boys at these performances, and sees the frenzied manner in which they indicate their approval of the vulgar, he cannot but concede that many must here receive the suggestion and impetus that leads them into lives wasted in dissipation and profligacy. Recently, in visiting one of the larger burlesque theaters of this city, eighteen boys were seen, twelve of whom were known to be under fourteen years of age. These young boys witnessed a performance which overflowed from beginning to end with insidious suggestions clothed to make immorality appear the normal indulgence of the ordinary life. . . . The flashy light of sensual pleasures was turned full in their faces, blinding their eyes."

George J. Kneeland is authority for the following:

"It may be said that practically all of the women in burlesque shows are professional prostitutes. The men in the shows are addicted to the lowest forms of degeneracy."

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Discuss the place and value of melodrama as an expression of the life of the people. Study the typical characters found in melodrama, the hero and villain, the benevolent old man, the heroine. What basic moral qualities are personified?
2. What are the deep-seated reasons for the degeneracy of musical comedy and burlesque? To what extent is this due to the character of those who present them? Does their presentation by amateurs free them from the taint of vulgarity? Is burlesque inherently bad?
3. Further material dealing with melodrama, musical comedy, farce and burlesque will be found on pages 149, 169, and 225.

3. VAUDEVILLE

Extent

Vaudeville has next to the largest popularity of all forms of dramatic entertainment. Motion pictures alone

exceed it. The Milwaukee Survey shows that 21.6 per cent of the average weekly attendance at all the playhouses is at vaudeville. Detroit shows 14.9 per cent at regular vaudeville, Kansas City 5.1 per cent, San Francisco 25 per cent.

Characteristics

Vaudeville is a straight-out effort to entertain the public by any dramatic means which comes within its grasp. "It may be described as a succession of acts whose stimulus depends usually upon an artificial rather than upon natural, human and developing interest, these acts having no necessary and as a rule no actual connection."

It has no aim to portray life in serious drama and yet it offers playlets and famous scenes from well-known plays, sometimes presented by leading actors. It has no educational aim, but it uses travel features or educational motion pictures whenever a hearing seems likely to be accorded. It is not a circus, but it displays trained horses, dogs, monkeys, clowns and other members of the zoo. Its stock attractions are songs and dances, scenic posing, monologue and dialogue skits, acrobats and jugglers. It is a medley of anything and everything that will "go." The different "acts" may, of course, be genuinely artistic and frequently are so in the better houses. There is an occasional act of real wit and cleverness. The music is often catchy and recreative. The acrobats and jugglers are usually skilful. Taken as a whole, however, the country over, vaudeville offerings are for the most part cheap and vapid.

Much has been said in praise of it, but the *American*

Magazine presents the following characterization of vaudeville's dramatic effects:

"The chief indictment against the vaudeville of today consists in this fact, vaudeville has done more to corrupt, vitiate, and degrade public taste in matters relating to the stage than all other influences put together. Vaudeville audiences . . . their minds . . . so long drugged by such a wealth of cheap and obvious entertainment—comic jugglers, who fall down stairs in fifty different ways; brazen-voiced singers who bawl about coming home drunk, and others of that ilk—that they had lost the faculty of thinking."[1]

Morals

The morals of vaudeville in New York City are thus characterized by the same writer:

"A somewhat objectionably wide experience with vaudeville bills has convinced the writer that a vaudeville show, especially in 'first class' houses, that does not contain at least one number that is calculated to make a decent woman ashamed of her presence in that theater is about as rare as snow in Panama. . . . Nowadays it is anything to get a laugh or a shock. The only limit is what the police will allow, and the police apparently draw the line only at indecent physical exhibitions on the stage, and not always there. The far more pernicious evil of suggestive songs and lewd lascivious jests goes quite unheeded by the authorities."[2]

It may be open to question whether these words are true of the better vaudeville houses generally, the country over, but it is doubtless a fair characterization of the morals of American vaudeville as a whole.

The San Francisco Survey indicates that:

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[1] *American Magazine*, "Decay of Vaudeville," v. 69, p. 840.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 844-846.

"The song and dance monologue, though well received when well done, is least worth while of all the acts. It is in these particularly that coarseness and vulgarity creep in. It is to be regretted that this vulgarity is enjoyed by a considerable number of women . . . though they blush, they applaud."

There is general agreement among investigators of conditions in motion picture shows that the vaudeville acts so frequently put on between the reels are uniformly cheap and usually degrading. Of these vaudeville acts at picture shows, Robb Bartholomew, in the Report of the Censorship of Motion Pictures in Cleveland, says:

"It is impossible to describe in this report the excesses to which vaudeville performances are allowed to go in most of the theaters where performances are given. There are on file several pages of carefully written reports, affidavits and other material describing vaudeville acts which were either suggestive of the immoral, or vulgar and positively indecent. Many verses of different songs have been gathered which would not bear printing in this report. Dancers were often seen who endeavored to arouse interest and applause by going through vulgar movements of the body."

Amateur night performances in commercial theaters deserve careful attention. The Chicago Vice Report indicates that:

"Another immoral feature in connection with the cheap theater is the amateur nights and conditions back on the stage. Workers among delinquent girls testify that these are the influences that first started many of the girls into immoral lives."

Cleveland conditions in this respect are thus described:

"The amateur performances given in many of the motion picture theaters should be classed in a different category from the regular vaudeville performances. As now conducted they

are in most instances bad because these young participants seek to mimic the vaudeville performers who are most cordially received by the crowds of the theaters. Unfortunately it is the class that can best portray things suggestive or indecent that are so received by the patrons."[1]

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Do you consider vaudeville an enemy of dramatic art? Why?
2. Is vaudeville in "our town" a genuine recreation, or does it leave the audience bored and stale?
3. Is there any vaudeville house in "our town" from which the one or more suggestive acts usually present are eliminated?
4. What is the matter with amateur nights? What is the best substitute which avoids their dangers?
5. Further material dealing with vaudeville will be found on pages 149 and 169.

4. MOTION PICTURES

Extent

The enormous popularity of motion pictures is, with the possible exception of the dance mania, the most spectacular single feature of the amusement situation in recent years. The Milwaukee Survey shows upon a "conservative" estimate that 210,630 persons or 60.2 per cent of the show-going public is reached by the fifty motion picture theaters in the city, and that the capacity of these theaters is filled from eight to eleven times each week. Motion pictures there get three-fifths of the patronage of the show-going public, and motion pictures and vaudeville together four-fifths.

The Detroit Survey shows an estimated average

[1] R. O. Bartholomew, "Report of the Censorship of Motion Pictures," Cleveland, p. 15.

weekly attendance at down-town and neighborhood picture shows of 399,816 or 73.1 per cent of the show-going public.

The Cleveland Report of Censorship of Motion Pictures for 1913 indicates that the average daily attendance at motion picture theaters is 115,000, while the average for Sundays and holidays is about 200,000, or "in other words, one in every six of our citizens attends a motion picture theater each week day, and one in every three when such leisure time as Saturdays, Sundays and holidays is granted." San Francisco shows an average weekly attendance of 65.5 per cent of the show-going public at motion pictures and 80 per cent of the total theater capacity in motion picture houses. The Kansas City Survey shows that 73.9 per cent of the show-going public there attend motion pictures.

"The most striking figure of the table (showing various forms of commercial recreation) is that of 449,064 as the average weekly attendance at motion picture shows in Kansas City, or almost twice the population of the city." Rowland Haynes, the chief expert in recreation surveys of the Playground and Recreation Association, vouches for the conservatism of this estimate.

This means that "if we rule out the penny arcades and the medical museums as special pick-up forms of amusement, the moving picture shows have four times as many attendants per week as the vaudeville, melodrama, burlesque, and legitimate theaters put together."

It is manifest that motion pictures have done more than all other agencies combined to increase the size of the show-going public. Their cheapness, their family and neighborhood character, their attractiveness to children have brought into the patronage of this form of

public amusement a veritable multitude of people who formerly took their recreations in private and seldom went to shows of any sort.

Walter P. Eaton, the dramatic critic, ventured the following in the latter part of 1913:

"There are certainly ten thousand such theaters (motion picture theaters), it is said, and probably the daily attendance is closer to twenty million than to the five million estimated by the proprietors." "This means that at ten cents an admission, we as a nation are spending two millions of dollars daily to witness canned drama."[1]

Characteristics

Any form of amusement which gets the attention of such enormous numbers of people, especially the young, is a matter of deep significance in the national life. The secret of motion pictures lies in the fact that:

"Films have been made so delicate that they will take a picture in an exposure of 1-42,000th of a second; the mechanism has been so perfected that streams of consecutive pictures can be taken at the rate of 5,000 per second, the measurement and control of this being entrusted to a tuning-fork—so far beyond our mere mechanical abilities do such figures take us."[2]

The single acting of a story or scene of any sort before the camera in the manufacturer's theater makes possible the reproduction of the same scene before countless people at small cost. The majority of films are made in this way, but large sums of money are also spent in securing pictures of actual events in remote countries or in the original setting of great events and with as many as possible of the original factors present.

[1] W. P. Eaton, in "Menace of the Movies," *American Magazine*, September, 1913, v. 76, p. 55.
[2] Filson Young, "Kinema," in the *Saturday Review*, January 27, 1912.

Motion pictures show interesting contrasts to other forms of dramatic art.

"In several important respects the moving picture is a more serviceable medium for story-telling than the regular drama. . . . The main advantage of the moving picture play over the traditional types of drama is that the author is granted an immeasurably greater freedom in handling the categories of place and time. . . . A story told by moving pictures may change its place as frequently as the author may desire. He may arrange his tale in fifty scenes instead of four. . . . Furthermore, the moving picture possesses a notable advantage over the contemporary regular drama in its ability to alter in a fraction of a second the point of view from which the story shall be looked upon. As soon as a character has passed through a certain door, the scene may be shifted from the room that he has left to the room that he has entered; and the eye may follow him all through a house from cellar to attic without any loss of time. . . . It is not at all surprising that the moving picture play has driven out of existence the cheap type of popular melodrama. The reason is not merely that the moving picture show could undersell the regular theater and offer a performance for five cents, instead of for ten, twenty and thirty. The real reason for the triumph of the moving picture play is the purely critical reason that it offers a more artistic type of narrative than the old popular melodrama."[1]

As vaudeville requires no thinking, so motion pictures require no listening. Their appeal is wholly to the eye. They tell their vivid pictorial story in a language all can understand, and bring from the ends of the earth the exact appearance of foreign scenes and peoples, thrilling adventures on land and sea, the story of great invention, all forms of work and play, and thus make the whole world kin in marvelous fashion. The variety of subjects which they may present, and the re-

[1] Clayton Hamilton, in "The Art of the Moving Picture Play," *The Bookman* v. 32, pp. 512-516, January, 1911.

markable degree to which they can reveal the human story by means of acting without speech, have given them both a wide range and deep intensity of human interest.

Morals

It is quite impossible to over-emphasize the significance of clean morals in motion picture representations. What has been said concerning morals of serious drama applies in no small degree here and with that increased importance which inheres in the fact of the enormously greater attendances indicated above.

In the morals of motion pictures the dangerous element has entered chiefly in the ease with which suggestive stories and indecent or criminal actions are portrayed, and despite all efforts to eliminate them, a small percentage of such pictures continues to be shown. Where boys and girls attend in large numbers, pictures of this sort are an especial menace. The vividness and the manner of the portrayal have frequently led to such direct imitation of the actions portrayed that the most serious crimes have been committed under the power of an impulse thus awakened. The San Francisco rating of the morals of motion pictures is 48.66 per cent good, 17 per cent bad, 32 per cent neutral, 2.33 per cent doubtfully bad.

The danger of vulgar vaudeville acts in motion picture theaters has already been pointed out in the chapter on Vaudeville.

The Chicago Vice Report calls attention to another danger connected with motion picture theaters, as follows:

"Investigations by individuals interested in the welfare of children have pointed out many instances where the children have been influenced for evil by the conditions surrounding some of these shows. Vicious men and boys mix with the crowd in front of the theaters and take liberties with very young girls."

The evil effects of lurid posters are also to be noted here.

Early in the development of the popularity of motion pictures, their possibilities for evil as well as good were recognized and the action of a few far-sighted men and women in forming the New York National Board of Censorship has had an effect of the utmost importance in safeguarding public morals by an efficient cooperation with the manufacturers of films. It may well be questioned whether any other group of men and women of equal size has done more for the morals of recreation in America than the members of this Board, for the significance of motion pictures in the national life of today is difficult to over-estimate. Motion pictures have in reality provided a theater of the people, not without its defects and dangers, but for the most part wholesome. It may be temporary in its popularity, but it is offering at the present to millions of American citizens daily a means of real diversion, some genuine education, and no small degree of uplift.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. What are the physical conditions in motion picture shows in "our town"? Are the buildings well ventilated? Are proper safeguards against overcrowding and fire provided? Are there an adequate number of exits?

2. How thoroughly censored are all the films shown? Is there need of a local or state wide censorship?

3. Does the popularity of the movies in "our town" seem to have an effect upon the patronage of the saloons?

4. What are the moral conditions surrounding motion picture shows? Are low jokes and immoral suggestions tolerated about the entrance? Is there evidence of improper action in dimly lighted parts of the theater?

5. What are the subjects of greatest interest? Why is Western so popular?

6. Study the moral attitude of the audience. Does it applaud the sensually suggestive when it is shown, or is the attitude one of decency and wholesomeness?

7. What specific points in motion pictures which you have seen do you believe should be eliminated, such as the clinging kiss, the suggestive embrace, the striking of blows, the brandishing of a knife?

8. Study carefully the reels that are not censored. Do any of them advertise commercial products of doubtful value? Are they up to the grade of censored films?

9. Further material upon motion pictures will be found on pages 149, 169, and 225.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS ON THE DRAMATIC GROUP

Other phases of dramatic amusements which the group may well investigate and discuss are:

1. Penny arcades still prevalent at amusement resorts and in the larger cities, notably Kansas City among those surveyed. There they receive 7.8 per cent of the total attendance at exhibition amusements. The pictures exhibited in these slot machines are always of a low order, frequently suggestive and indecent, calculated to catch the attention of boys and girls of prurient mind. Reference should be made to the *Kansas City Recreation Survey* and *The Social Evil in Chicago.* The

prevalence of suggestive and obscene postcards should also be noted.

2. Medical museums, "men only" shows, and similar exhibition places which show a variety of freaks and abnormalities, many of which are out and out fakes. These places are often catchtraps for the underworld.

3. Patent medicine, Indian, glass-blowing shows, and the like which make the round of the country villages, frequently traveling with tents and presenting a cheap entertainment. This is accessory to the sale of medicine, Indian goods, glassware or other articles. These shows depend upon the gullibility of country people and often succeed by the use of clever tricks in extracting considerable sums of money from villages where poverty is general. The persistence of Punch and Judy, puppet shows and the like at country fairs and elsewhere is well worth attention. The latest successors to these traveling entertainments are the motion picture shows which make the rounds of the smallest villages during the summer months with tent equipment.

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CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL RENDEZVOUS GROUP OF AMUSEMENTS

The second general phase of the amusement problem embraces:

1. Cafés with amusement features and similar places.
2. Public dance halls.
3. Pool rooms and similar "hangouts" for men.

These resorts have this in common, that they bring people together for social intercourse. They variously offer opportunity for eating and drinking, smoking, music and dancing, games, and a certain amount of general sociability. The first and second headings above cover institutions for men and women, the third, for men alone.

1. CAFÉS WITH AMUSEMENT FEATURES

Cabarets, music halls where food and drink are sold, beer gardens, roof gardens and the like.

Extent

This group represents an important and popular phase of the problem. Under it let us study those places which ordinarily dispense to men and women both food and

drink, and which provide music or other entertainment features as a part of the bill of fare.

It is not easy to draw a line between these and other places more or less like them and thus get at their number. On one side is the ordinary free-lunch bar saloon and the field of the liquor problem. On another side are the rendezvous of the underworld, and the field of the social evil. On another side still is cheap vaudeville and the dramatic amusement field; while on the near side they shade off into ordinary restaurants.

It it indeed the hybrid nature of these places typified in the cabaret, quasi-dramatic, quasi-musical, dispensing food and drink to all who have the price, and whose appearance does not offend the management, which gives them whatever distinctive character they have.

The puzzle of finding a basis of classification for institutions of this general type is well illustrated in the following quotation from a novel of 1914, which also shows the difficulty of getting at any figures showing their extent.

"Funny how this building tells the story of the last few years," she said. "A few winters ago we thought it was amusing to go to supper at a good restaurant after the theater, have something nice to eat and drink, talk a while, and go home to bed. We thought we were very devilish. . . . And now the place down stairs is deserted.

"Then somebody started the cabaret. And we flocked to that. We ate the filthiest stuff and drank the rottenest wine, and didn't care, so long as they had some sensational dancer or singer cavorting in the aisle. They were so close you could hear them grunt, and they looked like frights in their make-up. But we thought it was exciting. . . . But it has become so tame and stupid that it is quite respectable."

"At present we are dancing in the aisles ourselves, crowding the professional entertainers off their own floors. . . . What-

ever we do is wrong, so, as my youngest boy says, 'What's the use and what's the diff?'"

"Only one thing worries me," said Winifred, as she peeled her gloves from her great arms and her tiny hands. "What will come next? Even this can't keep us interested much longer."[1]

The important fact from the point of view of this study is the apparently rapid increase of places of this general type frequented by the public in the larger cities.

Some factors in addition to catchy advertising, which help to swell their number and patronage, are the dining out habit, the contracted space for the home entertainment of guests, difficulties with domestic service, and the pervading restlessness and sensationalism of city life.

Characteristics

Certain characteristics of these places are especially worthy of study. Their hybrid character has already been touched upon. As a combination between vaudeville and restaurant, the cabaret stands at the point of breakdown in the separation of entertainers and audience, for the entertainer not only performs before those entertained but also among them. The tendency is to break down this separation entirely, and for promiscuous sociability to develop. Yet the passing of this separation means the passing of dignity and any real musical or dramatic purpose. It paves the way for the crowd spirit to take possession of the place. Similar tendencies working out in different ways exist in roof gardens and music halls where refreshments are served, and carelessness in relationships is prevalent.

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[1] Rupert Hughes, "What Will People Say?" p. 41.

Places of this type ordinarily expect that liquor will be ordered with meals or refreshments and frequently make their chief profits from drinks. The management, therefore, fosters an alcoholic gaiety and seeks to spread the atmosphere of a "good time" throughout the place so that semi-intoxication is general. This means that an easy-going familiarity comes to dominate the crowd. This frequently degenerates into promiscuous sociability with the aid of some "star" entertainer, ordinarily a young woman in scanty attire who sings and dances suggestively in and out among the diners, frequently playing tricks upon them. The spirit of license easily develops under her guidance as the sense of privacy breaks down, and in the prevalence of the dancing mania a more or less general promiscuity of relationships may emerge.

Morals

The moral character of the places in this group varies widely, of course, for in some the management is strict, while with others "anything goes." Even though there be considerable care on the part of the management, the very nature of the place as described above provides the setting for immoral influences. The sale of liquor, easy-going familiarity, suggestive singing and dancing, a young woman or effeminate man to set the crowd off together in some common impulse—these are the factors sought by the underworld in its recruiting stations. The result is that many of the places in this group, ostensibly respectable, have become the rendezvous of men and women who pick up acquaintances and lure young people into immorality. The San Francisco report indicates "grave abuses which exist in connection

with many of those restaurants which are conducted in conjunction with hotels and bars," and characterizes this combination in the form there found as "a standing menace to the community."

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Discuss the dangers of being friendly and sociable with strangers in public places.
2. Consider with care the conditions in ice cream and soda water parlors, candy shops, and the like, where musical and other amusement attractions are frequently provided. These places are often social rendezvous and show many of the tendencies already described.
3. Discuss the rapid recent development of the restaurant into a place of varied amusement. What dangers do you see in the overlapping of different forms of business in these places?
4. Further material upon cafés with amusement features will be found on pages 153, 173, and 226.

2. PUBLIC DANCE HALLS

Closely akin to cafés with amusement features, roof gardens, and the like, and often directly connected with them, are public dance halls.

Extent

The number of public dance halls in any community is likely to be in proportion to the number of young men and women who are out of normal home relations and social life of a more selective sort. These places breed most prolifically in the congestion and abnormal living conditions of the larger cities. They are always present to some extent in smaller cities and towns, and

there are few villages in which there is no hall which serves this purpose. In the present stage of the dancing craze, figures are rapidly out of date but may continue to be of value for comparison.

The Milwaukee Recreation Survey summarizes the dance hall situation there as follows:

"In November, 1911, 12,000 or 13,000 was the average number of people in attendance at dancing places, both academies and dance halls, on each Saturday evening. This was before the height of the season, when there is a larger attendance. Of each Saturday night crowd in November, 1911, 8,000 or 9,000 were between eighteen and twenty-five years of age, or about fourteen per cent of the entire number of young people in Milwaukee between those ages. Of this 8,000 or 9,000 about 1,000 were in good surroundings in carefully supervised dancing academies and in family gatherings in halls where older people of the neighborhood were in attendance. About 2,500 were in surroundings where there is little oversight. The remaining 4,000 to 5,000 were in surroundings which make for coarseness, if nothing worse is said of them. Some of these latter named places are distinctly vicious."

The situation in 1911 in Chicago, a city of 2,185,283, is thus described in "The Social Evil in Chicago":

"There are approximately 275 public dance halls in Chicago which are rented periodically to so-called pleasure clubs and societies, or are conducted by individuals. Many of these halls are frequented by minors, both girls and boys, and in some instances they are surrounded by great temptations and dangers."

Mrs. Charles H. Israels thus describes the New York situation in 1911:

"In New York City over 500 public dance halls are registered as such, and about one-half of them are operated as dancing academies. Taking in all of the dance halls, dancing academies

and amusement resorts in and around New York City where dancing may be indulged in the year around, the rough average attendance in a year would mount up to four or five million young people between the ages of fifteen and thirty. In Manhattan Borough alone about 100,000 young people are taught to dance each week. The storm of dance madness has come over the young people of New York."[1]

The extent of the dance hall situation of 1910 in Cleveland, a city of 560,663 population, is thus summarized in the pamphlet "Story of Public Dance Halls":

"Five thousand girls and 6,500 young men were found in attendance at the 79 dances in public halls visited. There were altogether 130 dance halls where pay dances were given."

The Kansas City Survey, covering April, 1911, to April, 1912, shows "a total of 16,566 as the total average weekly attendance at all types of dancing places in Kansas City."

An unpublished report of Louisville, a city of 223,928 population, shows 33 dance halls, 9 of which are in buildings where liquor is sold, and in adjacent buildings or on opposite corners.

The San Francisco report states that "Of the hundred and two dance halls in the city and county of San Francisco forty are in the district known as the Barbary Coast. All of these dances are operated in connection with saloons or cafés."

Characteristics

Public dancing places are of two main types—dancing academies, and public dance halls. Dancing academies are

[1] Mrs. C. H. Israels, in "Diverting a Pastime," *Leslie's*, July 27, 1911.

". . . places in which dancing is taught. The typical academy gives lessons during the day and on certain evenings, perhaps three in each week. The remaining evenings, and of course Sunday afternoons, are either 'reception nights' in which pupils, their friends, and outsiders may come (for a price) to take part in general dancing; or the hall is leased to organizations to 'run off' affairs. In the latter case the renting organization assumes entire management, selling the tickets and reaping the profits. The academy thus shades into the dance hall proper. In this no instruction is offered at any time, but the floor is thrown open several nights of the week to whomsoever will pay the fifteen or twenty-five cents admission, and is rented on other nights for 'affairs' whenever the proprietor can get his price."[1]

Public dance halls range all the way from "the back room of the saloon in which couples sit around at tables, and, from time to time, rise and whirl to the music of an unpleasant piano," to the great public ball-rooms accommodating many hundreds of couples, and run solely as a moneymaking affair. All varieties of ownership and management are to be found in the control of these places, from that both owned and strictly managed by the "professor" of dancing, to the hall which is merely an adjunct to a saloon and open to the promiscuous throng or let to any individual or group which desires to "run off" a dance. The conduct of any dance depends indeed almost invariably upon the character of the leaders in the group who are present. In the Milwaukee Survey, Rowland Haynes points out that.

"A careful distinction should be made between different types of dances in dance halls. A majority of them appeal chiefly to the younger people, are conducted by the young people themselves, and have practically no supervision or chaperonage by

[1] M. M. Davis, "The Exploitation of Pleasure," pp. 13-14.

older persons. These should be carefully marked from certain family gatherings where children of five go with their parents and many married couples are present with the younger people. These neighborhood social gatherings are of high order in furnishing fun and in the developing of a wholesome neighborhood feeling. The fact that they are held in a hall or room where liquor is sold is simply an incident."

Four types of dances fairly typical are described by M. S. Hanaw in "The Report of Baltimore Public Dance Halls," as follows:

1. Academies for public dancing.
2. Public charity balls, often given during the winter by unions or "friends" of a fellow-workman in distress. As a rule there is no supervision. Profits are derived from the sale of drinks.
3. Public, social, literary, athletic, or political club benefit balls. There is always a bar and seldom is there any real supervision.
4. Balls "run off" by individuals for personal gain are perhaps the most lawless of all. There is never any supervision, and the crowd is always very large and promiscuous. There is extreme disorder and much indecency.

The third and fourth groups above are thus described by M. M. Davis:

"The average young man and woman are more affected by the larger dance halls. Innumerable clubs—social, fraternal, athletic, political—support themselves by 'running off' an 'affair' or two each year. The 'affair' is a dance, the dance includes drinking, and the drinks make the main profit both for the landlord and for the club. Such a situation is but another result of the lack of facilities, either at home or in public buildings, for the normal expression of community life. When people cannot form a social circle and dance at home or in a municipal hall, and when rents of meeting-rooms are so high that the club dues practicable for working people cannot alone meet the tax, then there is no other way than the present

system of 'running' affairs. Thus we get down to the basal economics of it. More than this, a further opportunity for the exploitation of the multitude leads clever young men to organize clubs for the purpose of 'running' affairs, thereby making profit for themselves. There are young fellows who are notorious as organizers of dances, operating usually under the name of an organization which they and a few cronies actually constitute. These worthies, of course, do not refuse to accept opportunity to utilize vicious agencies."[1]

The characteristics of dancing places in smaller towns are described by Mrs. Israels as follows:

"The young people coming from the country form the mainstay of the amusement resorts. They drift into the towns and into amusement places, and find on every hand a plentiful supply of their favorite type of recreation, the dance. In the smaller communities it is often a big room over a saloon, with immoral resorts in the immediate neighborhood, or a dance platform attached to a picnic grove. There the boys meet girls and the girls meet boys and the nights go merrily on; but the proprietor must be paid, and he is paid in the way that suits him best. Drinks pay his bills. While the purchase of liquor must often cost the girl nothing in money, it frequently costs her something else that she can never regain though she live a hundred years."[2]

Morals

The morals of public dancing places cover a wide range. Of the best grade of halls, carefully supervised, Mrs. Israels writes:

"There are good dance halls in all parts of the country. Some are under the direction of the city, like those in Chicago, where the field houses in the small parks serve the purpose of a

[1] M. M. Davis, in "The Exploitation of Pleasure," pp. 15-16.
[2] Mrs. Belle Linder Israels, "Conference of Charities and Corrections," Boston, 1911, p. 105.

dance hall available for young people of the neighborhood at all times. Frequently good dance halls are found as private enterprises conducted on the principle that the best things pay. These modern model dance institutions are in the Western cities with the exception of a few in New York."[1]

The preponderance of evidence upon the morals of average public dance halls is, however, decidedly in the negative. The difficulties which arise in one form or another are usually due to the breakdown of social proprieties, the ease of making acquaintances, the sensual character of the dancing which is allowed to prevail, the sale of liquor, the tendency to coarse conversation and profanity, darkness in certain portions of the building accessible to the dancers, or shadow dances, the lack of supervision, and the character of some at least of the persons in attendance. The situation in Chicago has been described by the Juvenile Protective Association:

". . . a very large number disreputable, with saloon attached, patronized by young girls. . . . Dancing is only a secondary consideration; drinking is the principal object. The girl is not welcome unless she drinks. From this sort of amusement the end is sure."

The full description of these places as given in the Chicago Vice Report and other authoritative documents shows how the amusement problem and the vice problem merge into one in the lower grade halls. It is sufficient here to quote as follows:

"In nearly every hall visited, investigators have seen professional and semi-professional prostitutes. Practically no effort

[1] Mrs. Belle Linder Israels, "Diverting a Pastime," *Leslie's Weekly*, July 27, 1911.

is made by the managers to observe laws regarding the sale of liquors. Nor is the provision of the ordinance relating to the presence of disreputable persons observed."

Mrs. Louise DeKoven Bowen thus describes the Chicago situation in 1914:

"We need a law which shall provide that the sale of liquor shall be eliminated from dance halls. About 86,000 young people attend these halls in Chicago on evenings when dances are given and a large number of them get into trouble because liquor is openly sold, while white slavers ply their trade in many of these places and disreputable lodging houses are often in the immediate vicinity." [1]

The situation in New York is thus described by Julia Schoenfeld:

"From personal investigation of about one hundred dance halls . . . fully two-thirds should be listed as positively undesirable. Liquor, of course, is universally sold in the dance hall, and the character of a place may often be rated according to the time allowed for drinking stands in ratio to the dancing periods. In a well-managed dancing academy, on a reception night, there may probably be a ten-minute period for dancing, with four minutes intermission for rest and refreshments. In a low dance hall the spieling period might be four minutes, with fifteen minutes between devoted to drinking."

The Cleveland situation in 1910, before the remarkable improvements made in the situation under the direction of Robb O. Bartholomew, is thus described by him, and reveals conditions which may be found in many large cities where there is no efficient regulation of these halls.

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[1] Mrs. Louise DeKoven Bowen, in "Some Legislative Needs in Illinois," p. 19.

"The special investigation of dance halls which was carried on by a self-constituted committee during the year 1910, showed that young boys and girls, fourteen to eighteen years of age, were attending dances where liquor was sold in one end of the hall; that prizes were often offered to girls who would drink the greatest number of glasses of liquor during the evening; that these girls and boys were allowed to remain at the dances until three o'clock in the morning; that at many of these dances immoral women were allowed to solicit; that dances were held in buildings where there was no attempt at proper sanitation; that fire code regulations were unlawfully disregarded and that there were many unlighted passages, rooms and stairways where patrons congregated and conducted themselves in a reprehensible manner. The dances were found to be unprotected from disturbances and fights precipitated by intoxicated individuals or by gangs of toughs and rowdies who frequented halls where inefficient police were hired to do police duty. It was found that many of these officers frequently became intoxicated and that in at least two cases they were endeavoring to lead young girl patrons astray. These special police failed to see to the proper ventilation of halls, allowed all manner of obscene dancing, refused to prohibit vulgar and profane language, and encouraged drunkenness."[1]

In an unpublished report upon "The Social and Moral Aspects of the Amusements of Working Girls in New York City," Julia Schoenfeld writes of public dance halls:

"I found that vulgar dancing exists everywhere, and the 'spiel,' a form of dancing requiring much twirling and twisting, and one that particularly causes sexual excitement, is popular in all . . . The desire for popularity, the coarse language and the vulgarity of many, the easy familiarity in the dance practiced by nearly all the men in the way they handle the girls, deadens after a while the sensibilities of even the finest girl. Going to a place constantly where the greater number lack

[1] R. O. Bartholomew, "Report of Dance Hall Inspector," Cleveland, O., August, 1912.

restraint and refinement, the girl becomes inured, so that whatever first shocked her does not seem so terrible." "Some places went so far as to offer prizes of $100 to the girls who at the end of the month had the largest number of drinks placed to their credit."[1]

It is not surprising that A. B. Williams, Jr., General Agent of the Cleveland Humane Society, writes of a similar situation:

"Under such conditions it is not strange that one who deals often with the problem of the illegitimate child frequently gets the statement from the girl-mother, 'I met him at a public dance.'"

It is obvious that all of these tendencies and influences have been intensified in public dance halls by the "modern dances" in which bodily contact has been conventionalized to an unprecedented degree, and fainting due to prolonged sex excitement is not infrequent.

San Francisco contributes the following in its report on Recreation:

"Of all vicious dances, the Saturday all-night dance which has become a part of our city life, is by far the most dangerous. The records of our juvenile and other courts show that not only does one girl (as had been reported) sacrifice her virtue as the result of each dance, but that some weeks three and four of this kind are reported. There can be absolutely no question but that at these dances many girls make their first step toward the 'Tenderloin' and the 'Barbary Coast.'"

That the dance hall problem is not confined to the larger cities, but spreads throughout the country, is evidenced in the following:

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[1] *The Playground*, March, 1914.

"The Slavs in the Pennsylvania coal fields habitually drink heavily before their prolonged dances. The dancing halls which are weekly patronized by the working classes of these mining towns are not fit places for our young, for their minds are not humanized and their bodies are not refined in them. Dangerous and daring men have perfect freedom and are under no restraint in cementing friendship with gullible young girls which often means their ruin."[1]

Other immoral features which claim attention are the offensive "throw-aways" upon which suggestive songs and stories are printed, and the singing of vicious songs with the acting out of sentiments expressed.

The evil of the special liquor license in relation to dancing is sufficiently characterized in the following by A. E. Graupner, Assistant City Attorney of San Francisco:

"By reviewing the ordinances we find that San Francisco not only tolerates the sale of liquor at public dances but authorizes and licenses twenty-four hour orgies in the guise of dances and masked balls, under the ordinance providing for one day liquor licenses, and permits saloons to conduct dances for the purpose of increasing the demand for liquor."[2]

The moral dangers involved in public dance halls are clearly summarized in the San Francisco report as follows:

"Of all recreations, public dance halls bear the most direct and immediate relation to the morals of their patrons, and it is very much to be regretted that this influence, as at present exerted, is extremely destructive. This may be directly traced to three primary causes. First, the forming of promiscuous

[1] F. H. Streightoff, in "The Standard of Living Among the Industrial People of America," p. 142.
[2] "Public Recreation Transactions of the Commonwealth Club of California," p. 282.

acquaintanceships; second, the intimate relations of the dancers; third, the sale of liquor. In addition to each of these causes exerting an influence peculiarly its own, the three working in conjunction form a combination that is extremely destructive of the moral sense of the participant."

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. The following points may well be discussed: What prompts most young people to go to public dance halls? Are these desires right enough and natural in themselves? What are the chief dangers to which young people are exposed? In some groups a thorough discussion of facts set forth by the Chicago Vice Commission and other reports may be held. Such a discussion should, however, have the definite aim of improving local conditions.

2. A local investigation as to dance halls might be made by one or two mature and thoroughly experienced persons on behalf of the group, but a visit by the group to a public dance hall would, of course, be out of place. Mere curiosity should never prompt any social investigation. "Slumming" expeditions are uniformly condemned by social workers. They yield no facts to those who go that are not better obtainable elsewhere. They intensify the evils which they go to see. Social investigation of any real value is a delicate, difficult, and frequently dangerous piece of work. It should seldom be undertaken save by professional workers.

3. The group should consider the value of skating rinks as akin to dance halls but furnishing more wholesome exercise.

4. Some groups may be tempted to digress from the main subject at this point to take up a discussion of the social evil or the liquor problem. The limits of this study make that inadvisable here.

5. Further material upon public dance halls will be found on pages 153, 173, and 226.

3. POOLROOMS AND SIMILAR "HANGOUTS" FOR MEN

The third general phase of the social rendezvous group deals with those public places where men congregate for amusement.[1]

Among them are pool and billiard halls, gaming and drinking "clubs," bowling alleys, shooting galleries, cigar stores, barber shops, depots, hotel lobbies, and other "hangouts." With these should be included certain street corners and other outdoor loafing places, notably those in the neighborhood of railroads, saloons, hotels, and theaters.

Extent

It is obviously impossible to get at any general estimates of the number of such places or the numbers of men frequenting them. Figures are available from some cities, however, for pool, billiards, and bowling places. Milwaukee shows 842 pool places, 24 billiard places, 91 bowling places. "Only a small fraction of the pool tables are in regular pool and billiard parlors devoted chiefly to these games. The majority are single tables scattered in a little over eight hundred saloons, and furnish an adjunct to that neighborhood place of amusement."

The 63 billiard rooms of Montreal are reported to average 3,000 men a night. The unpublished Recreation Survey of Rochester, N. Y., shows "190 pool and

[1] The saloon, the chief of all these places, is considered under "The Liquor Problem," rather than here. Reference should be made to that problem, Study No. 1, "Studies in American Social Conditions," where a selected bibliography will be found.

billiard and bowling places," and Louisville, Ky., 107 pool and billiard rooms. The Kansas City report shows 197 pool and billiard parlors with 153,387 as the average weekly attendance on this type of amusement. Age records were not taken at these inspections except to note many minors. The Detroit Survey shows 297 poolrooms, 16 billiard rooms, 36 bowling alleys, 5 shooting galleries.

"Providence, R. I., shows an estimated 32,600 as the total attendance at the 160 pool rooms and 18 bowling alleys each week. . . . The number of individual men is probably at least one-third that number. Of more than 10,000 estimated habitues of these places, it is found that about three-quarters are young men under twenty-five years of age. Of the places where pool is played, practically one-half, 73, have liquor, and 58 of these are really bar-rooms, with one pool table, in most cases little used."

Indianapolis shows a weekly attendance in winter of 190,000. There were 471 licenses granted in 1913. These figures seem to indicate that in typical American cities the attendance at these places is considerable, and when all the "hangouts" included under this phase of the social rendezvous group are considered, it is evident that a large proportion of the young men of any city spend much of their leisure in them.

Characteristics

The characteristics of places included under this grouping vary widely, but have their unifying factors in their "men only" character and conversation, in games of some sort, smoking, frequently petty gambling, and the sale of liquor either in the rendezvous or near it. In pool, billiard and bowling places, the loser pays the cost of the game. The gambling may be a side issue

to the playing of some game of skill, or it may be the entire attraction.

Morals

A considerable proportion of places in this group which are under management, are well run and cater to a clean trade which comes for the sake of the games and a democratic meeting place. The Kansas City chart on the moral grading of commercial recreation rates pool halls as 46.2 per cent good, and bowling alleys as 77.1 per cent good.

Considering all the places included in this group, however, it seems apparent that serious immorality characterizes many of them. Conversation is apt to be low grade, as reported from Montreal, "a great deal of vile talk and coarse language."

Gambling on the outcome of various games is widely prevalent and is in fact the chief interest in many of these rendezvous, especially in gaming "clubs," card joints, racetrack and baseball pool rooms, and ordinary gambling joints with their typical mechanical devices for various sorts of gambling.

Where liquor is dispensed in the place or near it, typical saloon conditions develop, and frequently "many men under the influence of liquor" are found. The companionship of the liquor traffic with men's games is always a serious evil wherever it is permitted.

One of the chief dangers in these rendezvous is the gang spirit, which frequently characterizes them. They may start as a loitering place for idle boys who gradually form into a gang and not infrequently become centers of the most immoral and criminal influences. They

seem to become hotbeds of lawlessness, generating the most vicious growths of the crowd spirit. These rendezvous at their worst, indeed, are the meeting places of the underworld mashers, cadets, procurers, gangsters, gunmen, thieves, and criminals of all sorts.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Members of the group should be delegated to study the "hangouts" of the men of the town. All possible information should be secured as to the character of these places, and some estimate formed as to the gangs which frequent them.

2. Can law-breaking in "our town" be traced to any of these rendezvous?

3. Further material dealing with pool rooms and similar "hangouts" for men will be found on pages 153, 173, and 226.

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CHAPTER IV

THE ATHLETIC GROUP OF AMUSEMENTS

1. AMATEUR ATHLETICS

Extent

The wide extent and deep significance of amateur athletics is not appreciated by those who identify them solely with college football, baseball, rowing and track games. The newspapers have greatly exaggerated the comparative importance of college athletics. A far wider field opens when we consider all the ways in which the American people find recreation in manifold athletic exercises which return to those who participate no other pay than pleasure. Scrub baseball easily yells itself into the place of first importance upon this view of the case. No American village and no normal American home fails to have some interest in one of the following activities: Baseball and football, boating, tramping, track games, tennis, boxing, bowling, golf, swimming, riding or driving, and such winter sports as bobbing, skating and skiing. The prevalence of amateur athletics needs to be appreciated as a most significant fact in the national life.

Schools and colleges are awake to the educational sig-

nificance of these activities, instinctive and irrepressible as they are wherever young people come together, and the organization of athletics in educational institutions is well-nigh universal. Instructors who are members of the regular instructional staff are usually in charge, and in many institutions some form of activity is made compulsory upon all students. Intercollegiate, interscholastic and interclub athletic leagues of many sorts cover the country like a network, bringing enormous numbers of young men into healthful competitive sport. Among the most important of these are the public school athletic leagues of the larger cities. These play interscholastic games in all the chief sports, and enroll thousands of boys in over 170 of the larger cities.

Amateur athletics reach their most spectacular form in college and university matches, especially football, baseball, rowing and track games. The so-called "big games" have become national amusement events of the first order, and they deserve special study, therefore, from that point of view.

"It is probably a conservative estimate to put the cost of football to America at $2,500,000 a year; as for the cost of football to the crowds of spectators, the mere paying of an admission fee just begins it. Hotels and carriages, banners and all sorts of things carry the cost upward. If 30,000 people go to a game against Princeton or Harvard on Yale field, the $60,000 admissions only begin to tell the story of what they spend. For instance, not long ago the New York, New Haven & Hartford made public the returns of its football business, amounting to not less than $120,000, or nearly the average day's passenger traffic."[1]

[1] Arthur Reeve, "What America Spends for Sport," *Outing*, v. 57, p. 304, December, 1910.

Characteristics

The distinctive characteristics of these games and exercises are too many and varied for specific comment, yet they are to be recognized as a national asset of immense value, for they all minister to health and efficiency, to sociability and cooperation, and are often more profoundly educative than formal instruction. The meaning of loyalty and basic morality enter the very fiber of American youth through well-conducted athletics. Football has been the object of much adverse criticism, primarily upon the points of physical danger and brutality. Expert opinion is widely divided, and the rules have been revised a number of times. The prevalence and popularity of the game increases, and a decided balance of opinion among college presidents is favorable to its continuance under proper regulation.

Morals

In considering the whole field of amateur athletics, it is refreshing to find effective moral influences at work throughout this phase of the national amusement situation.

Both the moral and mental values of well-conducted athletics are now recognized as not less significant than their physical value and the work of school and college athletic leagues, where held to true amateur standards, has greatly heightened the student morale of the country.

One of the chief moral dangers in athletics is the temptation to win at any price, which not infrequently leads to dishonesty either within the game itself or in the introduction of players who are ineligible under the amateur rules as agreed upon. The excessive desire to

win also leads not infrequently to rough and brutal play, creating a low moral tone in the team and its supporters, which in turn reacts to the detriment of all concerned, especially of boys in the habit-forming age. These dangers and others are intensified by the increase of publicity, by large attendances of spectators, by athletic "hero worship" and by the prevalence of certain false attitudes which find their way in from the realm of professional sport. The steady maintenance of the highest amateur standards alone prevents the encroachment of these dangers.

Such attendant evils as rowdyism, disrespect of spectators for authority, gambling and intoxication, which at times accompany certain phases of these sports, are noticeably in opposition to the inherent demands of the sports themselves, and they are, therefore, not just criticisms of athletics. These all tend to disappear as the games are more effectively managed and standards of good sportsmanship prevail. We may safely hold that amateur athletics are the most wholesome and encouraging phase of the whole general problem; indeed, they are less a phase of the problem than an effective solution.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. This topic should be taken up with special reference to local conditions. Members of the group should report upon such questions as the following: What teams or clubs for amateur athletics are organized in our town? How general is participation among the young people in scrub baseball, tennis, track games, boating, tramps, golf, and winter sports? Are the girls athletic? How many people attend public games? Are there a good many fans and rooters who never play at anything themselves, merely fans and nothing else?

2. Do standards of good sportsmanship prevail in our home

town athletics? Can the team and its supporters lose a game like men? Is the leadership of the game clean, or do drinking, rowdyism and profanity go along with athletics as we have them? Are any of the finest men in the community backing up the team with enthusiasm and financial support? Are there any such men who help to quicken loyalty to town or school and who keep in touch with boys and young men?

3. An interesting meeting can be held by inviting an athlete to tell the good which he believes athletics accomplish. See the bibliography for references. Another member of the group, perhaps a doctor, should present Dr. Woods Hutchinson's argument on the "Real Danger of Athletics." See the bibliography. Doubtless other advantages and dangers will be pointed out by other members of the group in the discussion. The standards of good sportsmanship and good morals should be kept in mind. Young men's groups will enjoy a debate upon the comparative merits of different sports, football, baseball, etc. A college or school professor, or a father who has had experience with college athletics, might well be heard upon "Advantages vs. Attendant Evils." A member of the group should present a digest of the cost of American athletics as shown by Arthur Reeve in "What America Spends for Sport." See the bibliography. An interesting portion of the hour can be spent by the members of the group telling what out-of-doors sports they like best and what they get out of them.

4. Further material upon amateur athletics will be found on pages 156, 180, and 227.

2. PROFESSIONAL ATHLETICS

Baseball

Athletics in any branch may of course be professionalized; that is, they may be participated in for pay. There are persons who make their living as experts in every line of sport. The most conspicuous forms of professional athletics in America are baseball and boxing.

Extent

Interest in baseball comes nearer perhaps to being a national characteristic than any other single element in American life. It is difficult to overestimate the amounts of money, time and enthusiasm, and the numbers of people affected by "the great American game." The National, American, and Federal leagues are only the most conspicuous among the many professional leagues which in more restricted territory play off their series of inter-city games. The enormous total of financial investment may perhaps be imagined from the following:

"Here are some figures which were furnished by an American league club-owner. They are conservative.

Money spent—	
Players' salaries	$80,000
Traveling expenses each season	15,000
Southern training trip (expenses of 40 players as well as coaches, manager, newspapermen, trainer, etc.)	10,000
Cost of scouting system	15,000
Salaries of office help, including secretary, business manager, assistants, stenographers, ticket sellers, ground keeper, etc.	10,000
Advertising	2,500
Telegraph tolls	1,000
	$133,500

"There you have in round numbers the yearly cost of maintaining a major league club. The teams draw their earnings from the receipts, and approximate figures would prove that it takes slightly more than $1,200 a day to maintain a club. It is absolutely necessary that the teams perform before average daily crowds of 5,000.

"There are twelve cities represented in the National and

American leagues and the cost of the sixteen fields (each league contains eight clubs, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston and St. Louis having representative teams in each organization) totals something like $10,000,000."[1]

Some slight appreciation of the enormous attendances at professional baseball games in America may be gained from the fact that the championship series of five games between New York and Philadelphia in 1913 shows a total of 150,992. The receipts were $325,980.

The numbers of people who "follow" league baseball as one of their chief forms of amusement, though they may rarely be able to attend a game, is beyond calculation. Who does not?

Characteristics

Mr. "Casey" shall furnish us our description of the characteristics of the game:

"Such is baseball—our baseball! A good game is a three-ringed circus with a tingle of excitement for every moment. When a base hit is made, with two men on bases in a close game, lightning looks slow and poky in comparison; the ball sizzles about burning the air, the men on the field dart like streaks, while on the stand twenty thousand mad men worship their gods with a great outcry.

"Such is baseball—our baseball! a game that clutches spectators and squeezes them till they yell; a game that makes centenarians dance and howl and throw peanut shells at the umpire. There is nothing like it in the way of games."[2]

Morals

The moral dangers involved in professional baseball are the same as those described under amateur athletics,

[1] N. B. Beasley, "Baseball—a Business, a Sport, a Gamble," *Harper's Weekly*, April 11, 1914, v. 58, p. 27.

[2] J. P. Casey, "Our Great American Game," *Independent*, August 16, 1906, v. 61, p. 376.

with the additional pressure to win at any price which comes where such a large financial outlay is involved and where certain stakes go to the winning team at the end of the season, if not at other times. In the major leagues, however, baseball is such serious business and the entire game so reduced to absolute rules and regulations that these dangers are only rarely apparent. Will Irwin is doubtless right when he says:

"Baseball is no longer like horse-racing and boxing, 'mere excuses for betting.' Undoubtedly baseball players as a class are today the cleanest body of professional athletes in the world."

The betting evil so prevalent in connection with baseball is not fostered by the inherent character of the sport, nor by the management of the leagues. Betting and gambling are specific evils of themselves and fasten upon any phase of human activity where chance or uncertainty enter in. The national game is not to be held responsible therefore for these evils which attend it. The rowdyism which likewise manifests itself in connection with professional baseball is usually the rowdyism of a small section of the crowd rather than of the players, although there are occasional lapses on their part into "mucker ball." The morality of American professional baseball, especially in the major leagues, is on the whole nothing less than a national achievement and expression of America's love of clean sport in honest, hard-fought contests.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. The best place to study professional baseball is on the bleachers. The group should go to a league game together.

In addition to watching the game, watch the crowd. Relaxation, good fellowship, blowhardism, and peanuts are everywhere. How good it is to be off the job! See this cross-section of America down the row of seats! Even if a big, fat, know-it-all fan who couldn't catch a little pop fly sits near you criticizing the home team, you may still look upon the occasion as one of wholesome amusement.

2. Watch the crowd after the game; try to form some estimate as to what extent the evils of betting and rowdyism have fastened themselves to the good of baseball in "our town."

3. Further material upon professional baseball will be found on pages 156, 180, and 227.

Boxing

Extent

Professional boxing is widely prevalent in America under legal restrictions varying in different states. It is confined almost wholly to the cities, and is usually conducted under the name of an athletic club or association.

Characteristics

Of boxing as a "manly art," Theodore Roosevelt says:

"I have always been fond of boxing and have always believed in it as a vigorous, manly pastime, one of those pastimes which have a distinct moral and physical value because they encourage such essential virtues as courage, hardihood, endurance, self-control."[1]

It would appear, however, that the manly art, despite its virtues as an amateur sport, lends itself with singular fatality to the expression and development of brutal instincts when professionalized. As a social event, a

[1] Theodore Roosevelt, *Outing*, v. 95, p. 550.

prize-fight acts like a magnet in drawing together the lower elements of any city.

Morals

On the moral side, prize-fighting is open to the charge of extreme brutality, both in itself and in its effect upon the spectators. The extension of this brutalizing influence through the use of motion pictures now makes the prize-fight problem all the more serious, and the importance of the censorship of motion pictures all the more apparent. The race hatred engendered by the Johnson-Jeffries fight was a sharp blow in the face of our social integrity as a nation, and on a spot already sore and bruised. Betting and gambling enter into the very management of such events. "Prize-fighting has become a business, and a crooked kind of business at that." It is indeed those who have induced the prize-fighters to make it a business who have brought the ring into disrepute. The men who do the fighting are often a decent lot compared to their exploiters.

The degree to which the Reno fight was a great battle for money stakes, and the extent to which the whole miserable affair became the occasion of sensuality, gambling, intoxication, betting and brutality, make it for recent years a striking national episode, a climax of commercialization and immorality. The winner of the contest was estimated to win in all over $600,000, and the loser more than half that sum.[1]

The morals of the occasion, which were typical, are well described by an English journalist, who says:

[1] E. B. Moss, "In the Ring for a Million," *Harper's Weekly*, v. 54, pp. 13-14, May 14, 1910.

"I suppose there has never been collected in one place before such a body of sharps, thugs, and toughs, as descended on the Truckee Valley for this famous fight. As train after train disgorged its load, the bars and gambling houses grew fuller and fuller. No one seemed to have any thought or desire beyond drink, the spin of the roulette wheel, and the endless discussion of the coming fight. The whole atmosphere was unbearably squalid and dull.

"The typical modern 'fight fan' is a bar-room loafer, a gambler, a creature equally foul in his language and in his thoughts. Compared with him the pugilist is as Hyperion to a satyr."[1]

These are but the logical climaxes of the universal tendencies which always seem to be prevalent in prize-fighting.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. All the essential facts about prize fights may be discovered without attendance at the ring side. A round-by-round description of any fast fight, as recorded by the newspapers, will bring the uninitiated to an appreciation of the moral elements which are involved. Any study of the fight fan as a type will be amply illustrative of the characteristics which the business develops.

2. Further material upon professional boxing will be found on pages 156, 180, and 227.

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CHAPTER V

SPECIAL AMUSEMENT PLACES

1. COMMERCIAL AMUSEMENT PARKS

The fourth phase of the amusement situation to be studied is that of special amusement places. Here we may group electric parks, lake, river and shore resorts, "white cities," and the "midway" of many public parks, all the glittering train of large-scale amusement enterprises which have Coney Island for their dazzling headlight.

Extent

Such enterprises are a leading feature in the amusement offerings of most of our cities of any size. Their attractions are often highly spectacular and widely advertised over the neighboring territory. They attract, therefore, great masses of people to them. One Coney Island report alone has registered above 5,000,000 paid admissions in a single season, and the weekly attendance has more than once exceeded 500,000 people.[1]

The Kansas City Recreation Survey indicates that:

"The five summer amusement parks of Kansas City, Mo., are reported to have had in the summer of 1911 an attendance for

[1] R. W. Neal, "New York's City of Play," *World Today*, v. 11, p. 820, August, 1906.

the season of 1,991,780, and an expenditure by patrons of $669,605."

Characteristics

The enormous popularity of these enterprises intensifies their national significance. Their leading characteristics are worthy of careful study. The key to the enterprise in most cases is the necessity and means of transportation to some site of natural beauty where the resort is established. The transportation company in control of the situation is usually the important factor. The park features of the enterprise are often well developed either by the company itself or by the municipality which licenses the amusement features in connection with a public park already established. The amusement features of the enterprise are developed by the sale of concessions or rentals, or by the operation of these features by the company itself. These enterprises, usually active during the summer only, cater to the crowd as a crowd and the "carnival spirit" or crowd consciousness is essential to the largest success. In actual operation, the features of natural beauty—the lake, the ocean, the commanding view—are effective upon the people principally before they come. Once at the resort, the commercial amusement features reign supreme. They are developed and staged with ingenuity of insistent appeal. The crowd is barked and badgered, deceived and enticed into buying thrills of fleeting pleasure on shoot-the-shoots, topsy-turvy novelties, fake sideshows, sensational joy rides, carrousels, ferris-wheels, merry-go-rounds, acrobatic shows, chariot races, daredevil dives, scenic panoramas, and the like. Some of them are harmless, some of them thoroughly vicious; many of them out-and-out

fakes; all of them frankly sensational in appeal, and all calculated to separate the people from their money with the least possible return. Commercial profit is obviously the dominating factor in their provision. Feats of skill and daring are often performed, but the very sensationalism upon which they depend creates an ever-increasing demand for more risks on the part of performers, until death stares them constantly in the face.

Morals

Sensationalism is the basis of appeal in these amusement enterprises, and is the key to a study of their moral influence. While their influence may be genuinely elevating if the features of natural beauty are emphasized and spectacular features are not developed; or neutral if sensationalism is not carried far nor specific evils permitted, these parks as actually operated near most large cities are often thoroughly debasing in their influence. The sale of liquor is widely prevalent. A large number of unescorted young girls and boys stroll about, an easy prey for exploitation, and are often lured into immorality under stress of unusual excitement or temptation in the glittering or unlighted portions of these parks. The carnival spirit of freedom and relaxation frequently degenerates into one of license and gross immorality in the public dancing pavilions and unlighted places. The modern dances have intensified these tendencies, and speeded up the process by which the morals of the innocent are broken down.

The costumes and conduct of many young women at public bathing beaches are likewise a direct incitement to immorality and serve as an advertisement of character.

The objectionable features of the Kansas City resorts, which are fairly typical, are described as follows:

"Dark concessions, unsupervised bathing pools, petty gambling, indecently suggestive pictures, indecent dancing exhibitions, dark unpoliced parts of the park, and the permission of young children to remain in the parks unaccompanied until the closing hours, are features that should be corrected for the sake of the child at least."

The penny amusement parlors have indecent pictures, patronized by minors, and need censorship.

"The picture machines were topped off by lurid signs and suggestive pictures inviting the patron to look into the machine and see something racy."

The dance halls are characterized thus:

"These concessions are very popular. Many of both sexes go there unaccompanied and meet company. Prostitutes and men seeking prey mingle with those seeking innocent amusement."

Gambling devices are also frequently prevalent at commercial amusement parks.

All these evils are increased by the close proximity of questionable hotels where no registration by guests is required.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. These parks may be studied by many groups, either as a whole or in small sections in visits taken for the purpose under wise leadership. A number of features should be watched for. Do the people get real recreation and pleasure or merely excitement and novelty? What seems to be the effect upon people who go regularly? Do they keep their freshness of feeling, or

does everything grow stale, except the latest dangerous performance or an atmosphere of immoral license? Can you form a judgment of the character of a show by the sort of appeal it makes and the attractions it offers? What conditions prevail as to intoxication and the sale of liquor? Is there a public dancing pavilion? Are immoral dances in vogue? Are young girls thrown into contact with vicious men and immoral women? What conditions develop late at night? What happens on the late cars returning to the city? Is there any adequate policing of the park? Is it outside the city limits, and under the control of a corrupt county administration?

2. It is noteworthy that the amusement features of many agricultural fairs are identical with those of amusement parks and frequently quite obscure the agricultural interests of the fair.

3. Further material upon commercial amusement parks will be found on pages 157, 180, and 228.

2. RACETRACK PARKS

Extent

Amusement parks solely devoted to horse racing are not many in number, but extend their influence as an important element in the amusement problem by means of racetrack poolrooms and through newspaper and telegraph reports. They thus reach a clientage of several million people who "follow," and most of whom bet on, the races. Reliable figures of total attendances, gate receipts, and profits from racetracks, bookmaking, and poolrooms are impossible to obtain but doubtless run to enormous sums.

The "Encyclopedia Britannica" is authority for the following:

"Owing to the vast size of the country there are various centers of sport, which can be classified with reasonable accuracy as follows: the Eastern States, dominated by the Jockey Club;

the Middle Western States, under the control of the Western Jockey Club, whose headquarters are in Chicago; the Pacific Coast, with San Francisco as its center; and the Southern and South-Western States, with Louisville as the most important center. . . . What New York is to the east, Chicago is to the middle west, and a very large proportion of American racing is conducted close to these centers. In New York State the Coney Island Jockey Club, at Sheepshead Bay; The Brooklyn Jockey Club, at Gravesend; The Westchester Racing Association, at Morris Park; The Brighton Beach Racing Association, at Brighton Beach; the Queen's County Jockey Club at Aqueduct; and the Saratoga Racing Association, at Saratoga, are the leading organizations. All these race-courses, with the exception of Saratoga, are within a radius of 20 miles of the city. . . . The Washington Park Club at Chicago is the leading turf body of the west, and the only one on an equal footing with the prominent associations of New York State. With this single exception the most important and valuable stakes of the American turf are given in the east; and so great has the prosperity of the Turf been since the Jockey Club came into existence that the list of rich prizes is growing at a surprising rate."[1]

Characteristics

The racing circuits of agricultural and other fairs should be clearly distinguished from these race-track parks, at which the betting interests largely control the situation. Purses for the winning horses are offered by the fair management, horses are taken from one fair to another, and local horses are entered. These racing circuits spread throughout the country, sometimes covering one or two states or extending over a large section as the Great Western, which includes tracks between Cleveland, Ohio, and Phœnix, Arizona.

The races conducted by agricultural fairs have for the most part been well managed, furnishing a spec-

[1] "Encyclopedia Britannica," v. 13, p. 736.

tacular form of entertainment, improving the breed of horses, and have been kept comparatively free of domination by the betting interests.

The income which provides the necessary expenses and prize money at commercial racetracks is derived, in addition to income from gate receipts and the like, from the bookmaker's privilege. The following extract from a newspaper description of racing at Havre de Grace, Md., will reveal the essential points of the system and some sidelights. It is generally understood that bookmakers so manipulate the odds that they are sure to win against the public.

"But the bulk of the crowd was made up of racetrack regulars. Since the Percy Gray and the Horton laws put a crimp in betting at racetracks in New York, the racetrack devotee has been held in restraint. So, with a chance of letting loose some of the pent-up enthusiasm, he was here in all his glory today. In the crowd were noticed many faces familiar at the racetracks of New York, while many veterans of the game identified with the sport when the old Gloucester track was in its prime mingled with the newcomers, peered at the 'dope' sheets, and fingered their bank-rolls with all the enthusiasm of the olden days.

"Men discarded their dignity with their coats and collars, and pushed the bookmakers a merry pace to get all bets placed. There was little heavy play. Men occasionally cashed checks for $500 and lesser amounts that still ran to three figures, but the biggest part of the chancing was done with five and ten-dollar notes. But it is a fair estimate to say that 70 per cent of the ones inside the grounds patronized the betting ring and its opportunities.

"The betting ring is a source of rich income to the association. Jack Cavanaugh, known to all devotees of the running tracks, has charge of this inclosure and his ability to handle it and protect those who wager their money is accepted as proof that racing at Havre de Grace is going to be on the level. The

income derived from the bookmakers' privilege is large and goes to make up the purses offered in the races. It is expected that when the new track is running at its height, at least fifty bookmakers will occupy stools in the ring.

"Hundreds of men well known in political and private life in Philadelphia were seen among the throng today. The politicians were always active in the betting ring and in the third race Reybourn was the strongest kind of a tip among the henchmen of the former Mayor of Philadelphia. The good thing went through, too, for Reybourn beat the barrier, got off in front, and was never in danger, having plenty of reserve speed to stand off the rush of the long shot, Pretend, at the finish. The political contingent 'cashed' and was in good humor for the remainder of the afternoon."[1]

Betting is also carried on extensively in racetrack poolrooms which are operated secretly in the larger cities, especially in New York and Chicago. The news of races comes direct from the tracks by telegraph and telephone and is essential to the existence of poolrooms. The telegraph and telephone companies are primarily responsible, therefore, for the perpetuation of the evils connected with them.

Morals

The morals connected with racetrack parks are one with the morals of gambling and betting everywhere, although these evils seem to have been more closely identified with horse racing than any other form of sport. Great numbers of people of all occupations and in all portions of society have been caught by the mania for unearned money and have in many cases been brought to ruin. There is perhaps no more insidious evil in American life today than the gambling spirit which is

[1] Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, August 25, 27, 1912.

the perfect expression of commercialism in relation to any sport. It cuts the nerve of clean and wholesome competition in all forms of play.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. The general question of betting in relation to sport may well be discussed at this point. It may be considered from the point of view of its influence upon the bettor and also its effect upon the moral and business stability of a town where it prevails.
2. See the chapter on the subject in the author's "Christianity and Amusements."
3. Further material upon racetrack parks will be found on page 157.

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CHAPTER VI

SPECIAL AMUSEMENT EVENTS

Extent

Into the life of every community there come special amusement events. A circus comes to town. A group of men get up a street fair. A holiday is turned into a carnival. A military encampment or a firemen's convention is held. The railroad runs a special excursion to a nearby city, to the county or state fair. Some organization gets up a public picnic or a clambake. In New York, a Tammany leader "gives" his henchmen an outing. In Chicago, but recently, two notorious aldermen "gave" the first ward ball. Election night and New Year's night in the great cities have become modern saturnalias. Automobile and motorcycle races are widely advertised and draw visitors from miles around. It is obviously impossible to determine the number of events of this sort except locally.

Characteristics

No phase of the amusement problem is more worthy of study than these events, for they bulk large in the life of every community, and often carry with them a spontaneous interest and excitement which gives them

unique influence. It is significant that the crowd spirit usually dominates them. Their characteristics and their moral influence vary so widely that few general statements can be made. It is clear, however, that they may be more important in the experience of a boy or girl, a young man or woman, than months of ordinary living, or any number of customary pleasures. The vividness with which they are anticipated and remembered is a sufficient indication of their importance. How frequently the conversation of American youth runs upon this lofty reminiscence, "It certainly was a time."

Morals

Events of this class are especially significant on the moral side because their management usually lacks the permanence and responsibility which ordinarily characterizes an amusement institution in which some property investment and social reputation are involved.

The forces of evil take a special advantage of many of these events. Liquor is almost sure to be dispensed more freely than usual, and special permits are frequently issued by the licensing authorities. An outbreak of gambling more or less secret is likely to occur, and vicious men often import immoral women for these occasions. A special event may be staged in a day or a night and secretly manipulated by a few men to the moral undoing of a multitude—an event that would never be tolerated in a decent town, if it were not dependent upon the crowd spirit, the suddenness of its occurrence, and the secrecy with which it was planned.

To a large number of people in every community, a special event of this sort is always the occasion for a

period of extraordinary license. To many more it is a time of unusual moral strain and temptation. Things may be done under special excitement or intoxication which would never be indulged in under ordinary circumstances. A man or woman, a boy or girl, may be left maimed or diseased for life. This, as a matter of fact, is what America is suffering at the hands of amusement promoters and may expect to have foisted upon it increasingly unless the movement for well-conducted public pageants and festivals as part of a constructive recreation program is able to counteract it.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. This topic makes an especially important study. The literature on many subjects which are suggested for discussion is small, but the local importance of these unrecorded events looms large.

2. Make this topic an object of special investigation locally. List the events of this sort which have happened in or near "our town" the last five years. Estimate the number of people who participated in them. Who was back of them? What motives led to their being planned? What evils crept in? What effect upon particular people can be traced to some event of this type?

3. Study the present tendency in your own and surrounding towns and cities to "get up" this sort of event. Are there the sort of men in the management who will insure its moral as well as its spectacular success? Study especially the effect of these events upon children and young people. Do you see any way in which more efficient supervision could be attained? The members of the group should recall and, in some cases, state their impressions of events of this character made upon them during childhood.

4. Further material upon special amusement events will be found on pages 158, 186, and 229.

1. HOLIDAYS AND SIMILAR CELEBRATIONS

Extent and Characteristics

General holidays, numbering eight or nine in most states yearly, release the bulk of the population from their round of work to free days of recreation. The harder and more confining the daily round, the more significant is the day of freedom, and the less prepared is the worker likely to be for its wise use. The holiday for the great mass of workers is, therefore, a rare boon, and in many instances a special problem.

Holidays naturally bring an outburst of the amusement spirit. The form of that outburst, the degree to which it is shaped by the traditions of the day, or utilized by amusement promoters, is highly significant. The characteristics of the "insane" Fourth, still prevalent in many communities, are too familiar to need statement here.

Election and New Year's nights frequently bring special problems in the larger cities where they are coming increasingly to take on the character of enormous crowd demonstrations. The carnival spirit develops with the use of confetti, horns, and various other devices by which promiscuous horse-play spreads abroad on the streets. The lawlessness of this mood develops an element of heedless cruelty in the attitudes of large numbers of young men. There is an especially large consumption of liquor on such nights as these, and cafés with amusement features sell out their available seating space long in advance. The increasing exploitation of all such occasions by commercial amusement interests is obscuring the original significance of our holidays.

With the study of legal holidays should be considered those special occasions which are worked up more or less often in every community, such as street fairs and various shows, carnivals, firemen's conventions and the like, many of which are accompanied by the features prevailing in amusement resorts. This whole tendency, indeed, finds its climax in special carnivals at highly commercialized amusement parks.

These events vary so widely that a statement of their extent or specific characterization of them here is not possible.

Morals

The general moral standards and conditions of any community, and the immediate management of each event, will largely determine the morals of those occasions. The forces of evil in any community, however, are almost sure to fasten upon them for special activity, and frequently do a record business in demoralizing citizens and visitors for the sake of financial profit to themselves.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. It is highly important to study the local use of holidays and direct their celebration into such public activities as are described in the section on Holiday Celebrations and Community Festivals, page 186.
2. What are the moral conditions in "our town" on holiday evenings?
3. Do conditions in the factories and business places on the morning after indicate that the majority of workers know how to use their freedom wisely?
4. How nearly sane has the celebration of the "Fourth" become in "our town"?

2. EXCURSIONS AND OUTINGS

Extent and Characteristics

Public excursions and outings are everywhere popular and important events. No estimate of their extent can be made except locally.

They are a natural expression of the desire for freedom and release from the daily grind. Congestion in living conditions, and the speeding up process in industry accentuate this desire and increase the popularity of amusement parks and resorts to which excursions frequently go. Outings and picnics are often conducted by loosely organized clubs or associations which are at bottom really commercial enterprises. The political picnic or clambake is an especially interesting feature of American life. The conditions of travel in all such events play an important part.

Morals

An excursion by rail or boat may be so long, and the crowd of such a character that moral integrity is put under the heaviest strain and a spirit of license may develop with free social mingling of the crowd which loosens the ordinary sanctions of morality. Such a spirit may easily characterize a public picnic or general excursion, and is, in fact, often cultivated by the management, especially where liquor is sold and intoxication results.

The description of certain of these excursions in recreation surveys and vice reports indicates the presence of the worst evils, including the use of staterooms on day boats for immoral purposes.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Study the number of excursions from or to your town during a summer season. What are the most popular forms? Are the boats or other conveyances properly provided with physical safeguards? What are the conditions generally prevailing toward the end of the day or trip? Is liquor sold openly or secretly? Does immorality creep in?

2. Study the moral consequences of automobile excursions by small parties of young people unchaperoned. George J. Kneeland writes the author as follows: "To my mind the automobile is one of the chief sources of seduction now used. Young men with cars at their disposal are the chief offenders. They seek out attractive department store or high school girls for these excursions and the girls are wild to go."

3. THE CIRCUS

Extent, Characteristics, Morals

The circus is an institution of large significance to American youth, whether it be among the many one-ring country affairs, or the half-dozen or more claiming to be the "greatest show on earth." Its local manifestation may be looked upon as a temporary epidemic, and hence it is properly placed among Special Amusement Events.

Its familiar traveling zoo, its clowns, trained animals, acrobats, and aerial performers have important educational and amusement values, and the fact that the circus is attended by so many parents with children acts as a moral disinfectant. The further fact that a high degree of skill and steadiness are required by many of the performers, tends to check some of the excesses which other traveling amusement troops often indulge in.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. What amusement values are brought by the circus only, to great numbers of American children and young people? The members of the group might interpret very briefly their early impression.

2. What dangers lurk in the neighborhood of the tents of traveling shows?

4. AMUSEMENT FEATURES OF FAIRS

Extent, Characteristics, Morals

The amusement features of our prevalent agricultural fairs and exhibitions may well be studied under Special Events, for they are occasional in occurrence and last but a few days in a place. They capitalize the same crowd spirit as the other events here treated. The agricultural exhibits, wholesome as they are, stand in striking contrast to the usual commercial attractions. These frequently embrace most of the features of holiday celebrations and excursions, the cheapest sideshows and vaudeville, public dancing, and the variegated novelty features of amusement parks. Automobile races, aeroplane exhibitions, or balloon ascensions, are ordinarily provided by the management. The total result of the commercial offerings at many fairs is that the agricultural features are largely obscured and the people from the surrounding country are fleeced by fakirs and charlatans.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. What conditions obtain at the fair in or near "our town"? How important in the lives of country people are the cheap

amusements offered there? What idea of fun do country boys get from them?

2. By what system and standard of judgment are the concessions granted to amusement enterprises? Is there any system of inspection?

5. AUTOMOBILE RACES

Extent, Characteristics, Morals

The invention of the automobile released a new world of sensation. The enthusiasm which has swept the country for this great discovery has been seized upon by automobile manufacturers for advertising purposes, and by amusement interests for easy profits. Automobile races are widely prevalent at fairs and elsewhere as special amusement events. These races are hazardous in the extreme. The life of the racer is in constant jeopardy, and that of the spectator frequently so. The following extract from "How I Won the Vanderbilt Cup" is a sufficient indictment of these races as ordinarily conducted. It tells the story of a race in which there were four hours of gruelling contest, and drivers and crowd were in imminent peril. Such experiences as this at a dangerous turn were of frequent occurrence:

"Between the swerving Fiat and the inner rim of the road was an opening of possibly ten feet. The great crowd swayed backward as the Darracq hurtled into the breach straight ahead. Only the two left wheels were on the ground. A false move and the car would have turned completely over. . . . Over the next ten miles of road we were moving at the rate of a hundred miles an hour. . . . We were away again, this time with every ounce of power in play, with care and caution thrown to the winds and with everything hazarded in a genuine death gamble. There was no more stopping or slackening at turns, no further fear or concern over the reckless crowds that by

this time were pressing so far on to the course that for miles there was only a narrow lane open between staring human walls. And the climax? A mile from the finish it became evident that the dense mass of spectators was beyond control. Dare-deviltry was in the atmosphere. . . . As in a trance the bugle sounded, and the next moment with a flash and volley, the Darracq was over the tape—a winner."[1]

The death and accident list from this sort of driving has reached a large total. The speed mania takes possession of the crowd as well as of the drivers, and the attitude of some of the managers of these events is reflected in such posters as this: "Auto races this afternoon. Dare-devil drivers race with death on famous figure-eight track regardless of life or limb."

6. AEROPLANE EXHIBITIONS AND BALLOON ASCENSIONS

The stupendous discovery of flight by heavier-than-air machines has offered a new thriller among amusement events. Aviation meets enjoyed an unprecedented popularity in the first flush of enthusiasm over flying and still draw large crowds wherever they are offered as attractions. Spectacular flights by foolhardy aviators are less prevalent than in the earlier days of flying, and the permanent amusement value of aviation seems to be approximately the same as that of balloon ascensions. These continue in popularity at county fairs and in special endurance contests.

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[1] Louis Wagner, "How I Won the Vanderbilt Cup," *Outing*, October, 1909, p. 788.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. What is the danger to spectators in watching automobile races and spectacular aeroplane flights?
2. Do you know instances where the crowd have lost their heads and done foolish or brutal things?

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PART II

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS OF THE PROBLEM OF POPULAR AMUSEMENTS

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND FORECAST

The prevalence of professionalism, commercialism, and immorality necessitate a public awakening and the improvement of conditions by pressure of public opinion.

Popular public amusements have now been sketched as to their extent, characteristics, and morals. They have been studied frankly as a social problem. They make widely varying impressions upon those who study them, yet some consensus of opinion may emerge as to three outstanding facts. These are the wide prevalence of: 1. Professionalism, 2. Commercialism, and 3. Immorality.

1. PROFESSIONALISM

Instead of the wholesome love of play, the love of being played upon has become a national passion. The spontaneity of playful activities, and the originality which creates them are being lulled to sleep by *the habit of being amused.* Among great groups of people it is wholly out of date to "make your own fun." Especially where congestion of living conditions and the fatigue of over-work make private recreation difficult for families or friends, the crowds are flocking to the public

entertainers. They look on, wistful or jaded, while others do their playing for them. Yet not with these alone has the professional come to dominate the situation. Almost equally with those whose resources for private recreation are ample the compelling motive is *to be amused.*

The professional entertainer holds sway in every field from which he is not rigidly excluded, every field in which the rights of the amateur are not vigorously asserted. He plays the game better than the rest of us. We pay him to devote his time to it. His work has high social value if he teaches the rest of us how to play the game better, and we keep on playing, but when his superiority shames us into inactivity, into merely watching him, we are in a dangerous way. This is what has happened to us and the line of division between entertainer and entertained is an ever-deepening line save where reassertions of the amateur spirit restrain it.

A social disease has been spreading broadcast among us. The professional, whether he be actor, dancer, athlete, or what not, is the chief source of infection. The disease of *spectatoritis* is abroad in the land. Its germs are in every breath we draw and most of us are affected with that paralysis of play activities which is its most striking immediate symptom.

Here and there appears the aggravated case—completely infected—the fan who is nothing but a fan, a flabby creature symbolic of a multitude, a parasite upon the play of others, the least athletic of all men, never playing himself at anything, a spectacle hunter, not a sportsman.

Spectatoritis, like the professional who spreads it, depends upon crowds and crowd contagion. Our study of

amusements has shown the crowd spirit at work in almost every phase of the problem. This means that great masses of people meeting in the highly suggestible state of crowd consciousness are daily exposed to the professional entertainer, the expert crowd stimulator who has unique power for "the contagion of virtues and vices, in the epidemic of degrading or uplifting suggestions."

Spectatoritis is the crowd reaction to professionalism. It must be squarely faced if the amusement problem is to be solved, for its end is brutality and callousness at the loss of human life. We may yet avoid its full manifestations, familiar to other nations, ancient and modern, in established public spectacles of brutality. We are still a long way from the Roman amphitheater and the Spanish bullfight, but *spectatoritis* leads that way. Its way has ever been the path of a jaded sensationalism, and the sensational is the basis of appeal in an alarming proportion of our public spectacles. A clear-eyed public opinion must now reckon in advance with its full consequences.

A most penetrating statement of this evil has recently been made by Professor George Elliot Howard, the well known sociologist of Nebraska University. I quote at length a passage discovered after the paragraphs above were written.

"It is right, of course, to lay the chief stress on the influence of the spectator in creating the spectacle. Normally it is largely a case of demand and supply. The desires of the spectator determine the character of the spectacle. But that is not the whole story. The spectacle which the spectator molds, in its turn molds the spectator. The spectator is a being which feeds on its own offspring. Here is an endless circuit of give-and-take, which as applied to the spectator-personality might well be called the 'dialectic of emotional growth.'

"Moreover the reciprocal influence of the spectator and the spectacle in our days is not usually normal. The spectacle is commercialized. It is chiefly the asset of the business man—the entrepreneur. The exploiter of the human need of recreation provides what, under all the conditions, he thinks will pay. A large part of the theater-crowd is fortuitous. It comes from out of town. It takes what it can get, not always what it prefers.

"Again, it must be held firmly in mind that we have to do with a species of crowd. As such it is amenable to the laws of crowd psychology. Now the result of bodily contagion in the spectator crowd is greatly to increase the effects of 'multiplied suggestion.' Every emotion, every psychic manifestation called out by the stimulating spectacle is intensified. The emotional conductibility of the mass is very great. Nor must it be forgotten that pleasurable sensations or emotions, even if morbid, take the most enduring hold of the conscious or the subconscious self. They well up readily in associative memory. How vast, then, for good or ill, must be the emotional discharge in the theater-crowd. For almost every social situation, almost every moral crisis or mental conflict, almost every desire, passion or ideal is presented to consciousness, accompanied by all the allurements of light, color, rhythm or sound.

"Clearly, here is a tremendous power which calls loudly for social control. For ages the susceptibility of the spectator crowd has been exploited for vicious, commercial, or other selfish ends. Why not capitalize it for the advancement of social welfare?

"Commercialized recreation need not necessarily be bad if wisely regulated; yet, as a matter of fact, in the United States almost every form of dramatic spectacle has been put upon too low a plane, often a disgracefully low plane. How serious is the danger to society, is partially realized when we count the vast throngs which regularly back the playhouses.

"In fact, we owe to mob-mind in large measure the present low standard of dramatic recreation in our country. It is high time to give up the notion that only the bad is 'catching.' Even more contagious are the good, the beautiful and the true.

"The spectator-crowd at an athletic contest, a football game, game of baseball, a wrestling or a boxing match, a Marathon

race, is essentially a theater crowd, except that often it sits in the open air. The members of the spectacle are the only persons who exercise; and their exercise is not play but work, often for hire. The vicarious play of the team, however fascinating, does not exercise the spectator's muscles.

"In basic principle, the psychology of the athletic spectator-crowd is the same as that already presented. It is crowd psychology. Suggestibility is higher, contagion swifter, emotion more tumultuous, the range of suggested ideas or actions narrower, than in the dramatic crowd. The sub-conscious self of the spectator emerges; the elemental gaming or struggle instinct of the human animal slips its leash, and the spectator thrills with emotional reaction to the athlete's muscular experiences. Who of us has not shared in the hypnotic frenzy, the mob-hysteria of the 'bleachers' if not of the 'grandstand'?

"It is because actions are more 'catching', more readily intimated than words, that public exhibitions—in the theater or on the field—may prove dangerous, especially to children and adolescents. Happily, the more brutal forms of contests are being prescribed. Bear-baiting, bull-baiting, cock fighting and prize fighting are passing. Is there no need of going further? Do not humanism and the Gospel of peace demand that exhibitions of boxing, wrestling and other spectacles suggesting hurt, cruelty, brute force, or war, be abandoned? Yet in my own town a few weeks ago was presented a motion-picture of a bull-fight, before a crowd including hundreds of school-children."

This convincing statement diagnoses and describes our social disease of *spectatoritis,* and concludes with valuable suggestions for "the social control of this neglected aspect of crowd-mind." The writer shares our viewpoint as to the urgent need of a public awakening to the evils of the situation in putting first among these suggestions for social control the following:

"There must be fostered a powerful sentiment in favor of the public support of all proper forms of the newer recreational

education. By Nature's law recreative pleasures are essential to sound body, sound mind, sound character, and sound social living. Why suffer them longer to be monopolized for commercial exploitation—often for vicious ends? Why not coordinate them into an efficient division of social education?"[1]

2. COMMERCIALISM

Inseparable from the evils of professionalism and *spectatoritis,* stands that of commercial domination. The distinguishing difference between the professional and the amateur is the entrance of the money element. It is clear enough that the money element dominates the amusement situation in America. Back of the professional stands the commercial promoter and the promoter is wont to take his cue from the cash box. He is not seeking chiefly the social welfare.

Walter Rauschenbusch has well stated the influence of commercial control in the following:

"Pleasure resorts run for profit are always edging along toward the forbidden. Men spend most freely when under liquor or sex excitement; therefore the pleasure resorts supply them with both. Where profit is eliminated, the quieter and higher pleasures get their chance. The institutions of pleasure maintained by the people for their own use, such as parks, playgrounds, museums, libraries, concerts, theaters, dance halls, are always cleaner than the corresponding ventures of capitalism, provided some rational supervision is maintained. I spent an evening in a small Missouri town waiting for a train. The streets were in possession of an amusement company and lined with tents and booths. The company evidently tried not to offend the public sense of decency and to supply a 'moral show.' The saloons were doing a rushing business, but the crowds flowing along the sidewalks were composed of clean American farm-

[1] G. E. Howard, "Social Psychology of the Spectator," *American Journal of Sociology,* July, 1912, v. 18, pp. 42-46.

ers with their wives and children or their sweethearts, trying to have a good time with the facilities offered. But those facilities were so meager and so monotonous! You could pay a nickel for popcorn and soft drinks; or pay a quarter to see the clowns and the girls in brilliant tights perform in a variety show; or pay a quarter to throw balls, or toss rings, or shoot a rifle to win a prize. That was all; pay, pay, pay, and nothing but a gambling thrill or satisfied curiosity to show for it. This is what capitalism can do for our people in catering to their desire for recreation. Can the people do no better for themselves?" [1]

Commercial management has been well characterized as tending to sever the individual from the community, to prefer miscellaneous crowds to neighborly groups, to neglect the interests of the child, and to make no provision aside from moving pictures for the mother of the wage-earning family.

We recognized, however, at the beginning of our study that amusements might be good or bad independent of commercial management, and likewise that commercial management is necessary and valuable in certain portions of the amusement field. Yet we asked if it might not be that the present situation is widely dominated by a type of commercial management which regards neither art nor spontaneity nor the basic demands of morality. Our study brings us to an inevitable affirmative as the answer.

Let us be wholly just, however, to amusement promoters. There are a considerable number of able men in the "amusement business," who serve society valuably. They explore new fields of human interest, serving as advance agents in the discovery of that which will "go" with the people. They stake large sums of money on

[1] Walter Rauschenbusch, "Christianizing the Social Order," p. 440.

experiments calculated to open some new approach to the social mind, and enlarge the borders of human happiness—with profits, of course, for themselves, yet not without frequent benefit to society. The commercial promoter, indeed, often pays the cost of experimentation with the public, and in effect hands over to society a forged weapon, as in the now accepted use of motion pictures in education.

There are charlatans here, however, as in other forms of business, very many of them—a large proportion of those engaged—men who stand for the exploitation of human life, not for its service. Let us see the amusement exploiter just as he is, for he lies in wait for the spirit of youth at every corner. He is not a playful person, nor does he by his enterprises produce a playful people. With him the love of fun in the human heart is a cold matter of dollars and cents. He buys youth's freshness of feeling in return for sundry ticklings of sensation, and blights its glad spontaneities with his itching palm. He turns the pure upleaping spirit of play into a craze for mere sensation and coins up with an awful wastage one of the most priceless assets of the race. There follows in his train a jaded company of heavy-eyed, broken people who have lost the spirit of youth and the love of vigorous, wholesome play.

The underlying fact in the amusement situation is this, that certain financial interests have discovered the natural resource of the play instinct and are exploiting it for gain as ruthlessly as they have exploited other great natural resources. The depleted emotions, the stimulated lust, and the criminal tendencies which they produce by their exploitations cannot be traced back to source with the same deadly accuracy as bleak hillsides

and slaughtered stump lots may be laid at the door of ruthless deforestation, but the methods and results are not essentially dissimilar. In no phase of our whole great modern struggle against excessive profits for the few and in favor of human values for the many is the battle any keener than in this so-thought "superficial" question of popular amusements. As the congestion of city life thickens, and the daily struggle for a living wage grows sharper, the human need for release through real recreation becomes sharper also. It has, indeed, become for many a desperate need. "Leisure in an industrial city is life itself." The more tragic, therefore, becomes the loss of those spiritual values which are crucified by commercialism in association with play. The full significance of commercial domination is apparent only to those who realize how essential and how highly spiritual an expression of human life is made in play. If spontaneous, wholesome and well-ordered play is a profoundly educative and moralizing force, then the substitution of cold profit-seeking amusements, artificial and often nasty, can but exercise a correspondingly profound effect for demoralization.

Public opinion has before it the task of restoring to all groups of citizens a full opportunity for wholesome recreations unspoiled by commercialism, and also the parallel task of quickening for them that popular enthusiasm which is now so largely perverted by commercial interests.

3. IMMORALITY

A type of commercial management which is tuned to the cash-box cannot afford to be very sensitive about morals. Where money is first, other values get in after-

ward where they can. In other forms of business, overproduction to the point of "all the market will bear" results in price-cutting, reduction of output, or wider extension of markets. In the amusement business, overproduction seems to result in a state of glut which drains off in immorality. The emotional and spiritual experiences of the race are apparently elastic, capable of indefinite stretching at the hands of commercial aggression. Yet there is a sag of jaded nerves in the city youth of today, a loss of resilient moral tension for which society through some of its members is responsible.

It is as yet little realized in what a plot the forces of evil have conspired against the young people of the cities. They still start life with moral fiber made of the same essential texture as the youth of the country. The weakening of that fiber is the result of unbearable strains which a complexity of exploitations puts upon it. These young people are not infrequently exploited in their homes. They are widely exploited in their work and set to mechanical routines at the age when every natural instinct craves change and fun and shifting interests. In their reactions of fatigue they are caught in the grip of these amusement enterprises which are so often run with an unbelievable disregard of moral consequences. The filching of their meager earnings is only a little theft compared with the enormity of that robbery by which their spontaneous joy in life, their modesty and their chastity are plucked away. It is a terrible thing to bring the emotional and spiritual resources of youth to bankruptcy at twenty-two or twenty-three. The spiritual values of a rich maturity cannot blossom in such lives. The lust for profit has picked open the bud. It is no cause for wonder that youth wilts under the process,

that emotional instability is so prevalent, that the age of youth is the age of crime and that clandestine prostitution appears to grow with appalling rapidity. On the other hand, it is a cause for wonder to all who are close to these young people that boyish integrity and chivalry last as long as they do, so often victoriously, and that chastity makes so stubborn a fight for its life.

If these young people are to have their rightful share of high joy in life, morality must have the utmost reinforcement, for the power of personal morality—the power of the individual to refuse the evil and choose the good—is nowhere more needed than in the hodgepodge of confusions which characterize amusement offerings today, often making evil seem attractive and a good life repellent rather than beautiful.

The first step in the solution of this problem is a public awakening to the facts of the situation. Only as the full significance of professionalism, commercialism and immorality in amusements is brought home to the thinking public will reconstructions take place. The charm of home life will then be re-established, as it must, for it is the stronghold of morality. There can never be any adequate substitute for the home, however long the economic struggle, and however difficult the reconstructions of the social order required to liberate it in city life. An awakened public opinion must see to it in the meantime that a vast amount of organized recreation in the midst of wholesome surroundings is made effective, in order that society may bring to its youth those normal pleasures which make for morality.

The right-minded public has a fight on against the forces which now control the provision of amusements and against a small but vicious public which has learned

how to get from commercial management what it wants. A fearless campaign for wholesomeness is the immediate need. An alert and well-informed public opinion will insist that the amateur shall have his rights, that the cash box is meant to serve the recreations of the American people, not to rule them, and that the safeguarding of public morality is the paramount issue in the national life. The experience of all cities teaches as first in importance the duty voiced in the San Francisco report:

"A primary step toward clearing commercialized amusement from its vicious influence is the absolute divorce of liquor from all recreation."

At the spot where the servants of enormous organized profits and the forces of the social evil are daily hunting for American youth with intentness and ingenuity, there public opinion has its work to do. The beginning of solutions lies in its hands. Its time to act is now.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. It is by no means necessary for the group to reach agreement on detail points. If a clear conviction of the outstanding evils has emerged from previous discussions, the members may turn to a careful consideration of ways to correct them.

2. The relation between professional and amateur should be thoroughly discussed. Is *spectatoritis* prevalent in "our town"?

3. What is the necessity for commercial management of amusement enterprises? Is it a permanent necessity? Could its character be improved in most towns if the people demanded it? Could public provision and control be carried farther than now in "our town"?

4. There should be a full realization of the moral issues involved in the problem and their significance in the national life.

A member of the group may well present a brief paper on this point.

5. Do the recent recreation surveys and widespread discussion of amusements indicate that the people *are* waking up? Are we going to get ready to do something in "our town"?

6. What are the usual obstacles to a recreation program for a community? Inertia or open opposition?

7. What are the leading forces making for public opinion in any town? In "our town"? Who will help quicken general interest in the improvement of conditions? Is that not the duty of this group?

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CHAPTER VIII

RESTRICTIVE PUBLIC OPINION

Public opinion expresses itself in two main forms of action in relation to this problem:—in what may be termed *restrictive* action, and *constructive* action. Restrictive action registers the immediate popular protest against evil conditions. It aims to correct outstanding abuses, to maintain order and such propriety of conduct as can be secured by coercive measures. It does not seek to change the essential character of the amusement with which it deals, but contents itself with such outward control as is necessary to prevent expressions of lawlessness and indecency. The main weapons of restrictive public opinion are agitation, and governmental regulation secured by executive action, legal prosecution, and increased legislation.

Whenever an especially evil situation is laid bare, an outburst of popular condemnation is the first expression of public opinion. Such explosions are valuable if they are aimed at the real evil in the case, for they clear the atmosphere and reassert the supremacy of moral issues. They demonstrate that the moral sense of the community is opposed to evil when evil is exposed and clearly seen.

1. THE SITUATION IN GENERAL

Restrictive public opinion maintains that the worst offenders against public decency can be handled only by

the enforcement of adequate laws. It declares that there are staged in America every day shows so vile and corrupting to youth that only arrest and prosecution can reach the responsible person. It declares that in the worst public dance halls and elsewhere there are nameless scenes enacted in the night which society must obliterate by its authorized officers. It cites the effective agitation in California against the Johnson-Jeffries prize-fight, and the present laws in other states as illustrations of what it may accomplish on that phase of the problem. It declares that the worst of our amusement parks have become the actual summer headquarters and recruiting stations of the organized social evil, which can be cleaned out only by the most rigid repression. It maintains that under the stress of special excitement, evil suggestion or intoxication in connection with certain special amusement events, crowds of people often commit acts of vice or brutality which the police alone can stop. It maintains that only the fear of the repressive and regulative agencies of government, as established and backed by this type of public opinion, keeps the amusement situation anywhere near as clean as it is in any of its phases.

Doubtless the limitations of restrictive public opinion are many, but it is clearly indispensable, nevertheless. When focussed upon the actual evil in the case, it furnishes the emotional strength necessary to quicken public inertia, to curb the forces of evil, and to force mere intellectual criticism into activity. Restrictive action alone can safeguard the public from exposure to the worst forms of evil, and no real solution of the amusement problem will be achieved without due emphasis being placed upon this type of action. The following summary of requirements in legislation for the control of com-

mercial recreation is given by Julia Schoenfeld, covering the situation in general:

1. A license for all commercial amusement enterprises for the premises and not for the man who operates the amusement enterprise. This license is practically for control and not for revenue.
2. Centralization of authority in a licensing bureau, preferably under the mayor.
3. Regulations for safety and health.
4. Prohibition of the sale of liquor.
5. Proper closing hours.
6. An age limit for young people.
7. Revocation of licenses and adequate penalties for failure to comply with laws.
8. Adequate inspection so that a normal moral tone is maintained and regulations enforced.
9. Licenses for amusement enterprises conducted in dance halls.[1]

As a matter of effective control it would seem to be important that administrative power should have a maximum of freedom, with the least possible amount of court review in such matters as the moral regulation of performances. This means in effect a censorship by the administration. Inspection from the recreation standpoint by trained social workers in addition to and cooperating with police inspection apparently gives the highest efficiency.

2. THE DRAMATIC GROUP

Restrictive action in relation to this type of amusements has placed among the ordinances of many cities an enactment prohibiting indecent exhibitions such as the following in North Yakima, Wash.:

[1] Julia Schoenfeld, *The Playground*, March, 1914, p. 463.

"It shall be unlawful to exhibit . . . any drama, play, theatrical stage or platform performances or any picture of an obscene, indecent or immoral nature, or wherein any scene of crime or violence is shown, portrayed or presented in a gruesome manner or detail, or in a revolting manner, or which tends to corrupt morals, or which is offensive to the moral sense, or to permit or allow in any such place, any person to sing obscene songs or converse or discourse in obscene or indecent language, or to allow or permit any phonographic or similar device to be used for the reproduction of any obscene song, conversation, speech or discourse."[1]

Such ordinances when enforced are effective in putting the managers of show houses on their guard, and forcing them to keep their presentations within the limits of decency.

Restrictive public opinion frequently seeks to exercise control over stage productions by attempting to secure the appointment of a single censor or board of censorship for a city, appointed by the mayor. The purpose of such a movement has been accomplished in many cities by a system of licenses for commercial amusement enterprises, as indicated above. This is the most generally accepted method of handling the problem and makes possible a refusal or revocation of licenses for sufficient cause on the theory that the city has a right to supervise and regulate anything it licenses to do business in the city. A system of inspection makes possible the enforcement of the conditions upon which the license was granted, and likewise aids in the operation of the criminal law against offenders. As the cities awake to their corporate responsibility for public recreation, a rapid increase in the establishment of license systems with inspection is

[1] City of North Yakima, Ordinance, No. A. 122.

taking place. The extension of these systems to cover all forms of dramatic and other commercial amusement enterprises is urgently needed in most cities.

In the matter of motion pictures, restrictive public opinion has found an effective expression in the National Board of Censorship already referred to. Such a board is able to accomplish much in this particular field because of the concentration of the film-producing business in the hands of comparatively few concerns and their willingness to cooperate. The board has secured the cooperation of practically all manufacturers, and the steady improvement in the quality of the pictures has been notable. The report of the board of January 1, 1913, indicates that:

"At the close of three and a half years of work, the National Board of Censorship of Motion Pictures is able to report the following results: During the past year at least ninety-eight out of every one hundred films publicly exhibited in America have been previously inspected by the Board. . . . The motion picture programs of about 16,000 theaters in the United States are completely censored by the National Board. The motion picture entertainment of about 7,000,000 Americans daily is thus supervised."

"In struggling with the moving picture problem, the censorship is dealing with nine-tenths of the total theater problem. Moving pictures are now the most important form of cheap amusement in the country. They reach the young, immigrant, family groups, the formative and impressionable section of our cities, as no other form of amusement, and cannot but be vital influences of ill or good. They are the only theaters which it is possible for the wage-worker to attend. In their social and educational possibilities they provide the basis for a neighborhood theater of the people."[1]

[1] "Report of the National Board of Censorship of Motion Pictures," January 1, 1913.

There is an apparent need of a local censorship of motion pictures in addition to that of the National Board, if all objectionable films are to be kept from public view. An increasing number of cities are passing ordinances which provide that only those films may be shown which have been passed by the National Board of Censorship, thus establishing a local censorship which is easy to operate.

Joint action among owners of theaters in cooperation with the city government and an interested group of citizens may be effective in producing a satisfactory local censorship such as has been secured in Cleveland, O. Suggestions on these and other phases of restrictive action are contained in the following suggested requirements:

"1. A license for the premises for motion picture shows.
2. Definition of motion pictures and motion picture theater.
3. Regulation of the building and fire departments to insure proper sanitation and adequate fire protection.
4. Standards of lighting and ventilation, so framed as to be thoroughly enforcible.
5. Placing the question of censorship with the licensing authority, which will regulate the moral quality of the show, since through this authority it is possible to revoke or suspend a license, if the show is not up to a normal standard.
6. Requirement that children shall not be permitted to attend motion picture shows during school hours or after eight o'clock in the evening."[1]

The need of state laws on the subject is illustrated by the following:

"The motion pictures of Chicago are very well censored, and something like one hundred and twenty-six miles of films have

[1] Julia Schoenfeld, *The Playground*, March, 1914, p. 471.

been condemned and permission to exhibit them refused. In consequence they have been sent outside the city, all over the state, and many of the pictures exhibited in the small towns are bad—the rest of the state suffering for the virtues of Chicago! A state law should be enacted providing that all moving pictures should be shown in well-lighted halls, and the posters and advertisements outside all theaters and throughout the city should be censored and passed upon by the same committee which censors the moving pictures."[1]

It is to be remembered that films which cannot be reached by National, state or local censorship are subject to criminal prosecution if they are of such a nature as to come under the law.

3. THE SOCIAL RENDEZVOUS GROUP

A. Restrictive action in relation to cafés with amusement features has expressed itself chiefly in city ordinances covering the sale of liquor and disorderly conduct. Cafés, cabarets, and music halls in which the amusement features are highly developed, and likewise those in which provision for general dancing is made in connection, are comparatively new as subjects for special legislation, but are now coming to be placed under the control of license bureaus.

It is difficult to classify, however, and extremely difficult to regulate such institutions as the large restaurants of San Francisco having a hotel adjunct and furnishing, in addition to food and liquor, amusement features, including dancing. The report of the Commonwealth Club suggests an important principle in the following: "A policy which would make for the separa-

[1] Louise DeK. Bowen, "Some Legislative Needs in Illinois," p. 21.

tion of overlapping businesses, where abuses arise by virtue of the overlap, would be in line with the best interests of the community as well as of the purveyors of decent amusement by taking away their most subtle and dangerous competition."

B. The following requirements should be sought for in working out legislation for dance halls:

"1. A license should be required for the premises used for dance halls and not for the man who operates the hall. This places upon the owner of the hall responsibility for the conduct of the place. Permits for public balls and dances should be exacted and satisfactory references furnished, in order that the type of frequenters of public halls may be regulated.

2. Regulations of the building and fire departments should be demanded in order to insure proper sanitation and adequate fire protection. Halls should be properly lighted and all rooms should be kept open. This gives an opportunity to close the small, dark, poorly-ventilated dance hall.

3. The sale of liquor should be prohibited.

4. The giving of return checks to dancers should be forbidden, so that the saloons and immoral places that exist in a neighborhood may not be utilized during the dancing period. Dance halls should not be allowed in connection with rooming houses or hotels.

5. Immoral dancing should be forbidden.

6. A reasonable hour for closing the dance should be exacted. Half past twelve is suggested, with a possible special permit to be issued for later hours on occasion.

7. Attendance of minors under eighteen should be forbidden unless accompanied by parent or guardian.

8. Inspection should be demanded and revocation of license or other penalty imposed for violations.

9. License fee should be flat or graded according to the size of the dancing space."[1]

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[1] Julia Schoenfeld, *The Playground*, March, 1914, pp. 463-464.

A rapidly increasing number of cities, recently estimated at 158, are adopting ordinances which incorporate requirements in whole or in part as suggested above, and their value in restricting or eliminating the worst evils indicated in the previous chapter upon dance halls, is of the utmost significance.

The following statement from G. J. Kneeland to the author emphasizes an important point:

"The chief thing to watch in cleaning up the dance hall situation is the character of the clubs or organizations which apply for permits to give dances. Before such permits are granted these organizations should be investigated. This is in many cases the crux of the whole matter because the members of such clubs are usually attached to some political party and the managers of halls dare not interfere with their method of conducting their dances."

C. In working out legislation for bowling alleys and pool rooms, the following requirements should be sought:

"1. A license should be exacted for the premise and not for the man who operates the alley or pool room. This license is practically for control and not for revenue.

2. Boys under eighteen should not be permitted to enter.

3. No liquor should be sold or gambling allowed on the premises.

4. Proper regulations for ventilation and sanitation should be demanded.

5. The license should be revoked for violations."[1]

Restrictive action in regard to other rendezvous for men is ordinarily taken through police control of gambling, disorderly conduct, and the illegal sale of liquor.

[1] Julia Schoenfeld, *The Playground*, March, 1914, p. 479.

The following is the Wisconsin law covering the suppression of gambling in cities, villages and towns:

Section 959—70: The common councils of all cities of this state, whether organized under the general law or special charters, and the board of trustees of all villages and the town boards of all towns, shall have the power to restrain, prohibit or suppress all descriptions of gambling, fraudulent devices and practices, and to cause the seizure and destruction of all implements, machines, tables, articles and things manufactured and devised solely for the purpose of playing thereon games of chance for money or other property, and all implements, machines, devices, furniture, articles or things actually found being used for playing thereon or therewith games of chance for money or property, after a judicial determination as to the character or the use of such implements, machines, devices, tables, furniture, articles or things.

4. THE ATHLETIC GROUP

A. Restrictive public opinion in relation to amateur athletics finds its chief expression in the careful rules and regulations drawn up by the various leagues and organizations, such as The Amateur Athletic Union, The College Athletic Union, The Public Schools Athletic Leagues. These provisions are too many and varied for specific mention here. They are aimed for the most part, however, at the maintenance of the rules of the game as agreed upon, the preservation of the standards of amateur sport, and the elimination of brutality and unfairness.

Restrictive public opinion also expresses itself in the control of disorderly conduct among spectators or players through police action or otherwise.

B. Restrictive public opinion in professional athletics

expresses itself, as in amateur athletics, in rules and regulations agreed upon between competing teams, by leagues or other organizations in control, such as the National, American, Federal, and International baseball leagues.

Police action likewise operates in relation to disorderly conduct.

Many states have forbidden professional boxing and prize-fighting altogether, as in the following laws of the state of Wisconsin:

Section 4520: Any person who shall, by previous arrangement or appointment, engage in a fight with another person for the possession of any prize, belt, or other evidence of championship, or for any other cause, shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison not more than five years nor less than one year, or by fine not exceeding one thousand dollars nor less than one hundred dollars.

Section 4521. Any person who shall be present at such fight, as is mentioned in the preceding section, as aid, second or surgeon, or shall encourage, advise or promote such fight, shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison not more than three years nor less than one year, or in the county jail not more than one year or by fine not exceeding one thousand dollars.

5. SPECIAL AMUSEMENT PLACES

A. Restrictive public opinion in relation to amusement parks finds expression through police control and sometimes through the license bureau, where such parks are within the city limits. Parks of this character, however, are frequently outside of city limits, and quite unregulated because of the inefficiency or corruption of county officials. Some provide their own guards and police.

B. Racetrack parks are restricted in some states by laws similar to the following in Wisconsin:

Section 1779: Any corporation found under this chapter to establish, maintain and manage any driving park may have grounds and courses for improving and testing the speed of horses and may offer and award prizes for competition; but no racing for any bet or wager shall be allowed; and any such corporation may prevent gambling or betting of any kind and preserve order on its grounds and establish rules therefor, and appoint officers and agents who for that purpose shall have the power of constables.

6. SPECIAL AMUSEMENT EVENTS

Special amusement events, such as holidays, excursions, and the circus, require extraordinary alertness on the part of the police and other restrictive agencies of government. Special provision is sometimes made in laws againt dangers or evils likely to emerge, as in the recently increased limitations put upon the manufacture and sale of firecrackers, fireworks, etc., tending to regulate and supervise their use on the Fourth of July.

An interesting expression of restrictive public opinion in relation to holidays is that of the Society for the Prevention of Useless Giving which aims to stop the commercialization of Christmas.

The amusement features of fairs may well be handled by the same methods as city enterprises, through a license inspection system.

Automobile and similar races are usually held under provisions and restrictions imposed by the organizations conducting them. These are frequently inadequate for the protection of racers and spectators.

The Aero Club of America has forbidden its members to fly over cities.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Lay the foundations for the building of a local program of restrictive action by presenting and discussing the exact situation as to laws and ordinances in "our town." For suggestions on local action see page 221.

2. Six different members of the group should investigate the six main subjects under which restrictive action is presented in this chapter. Report exact wording of laws and ordinances and bring reliable statements as to their enforcement.

3. The mayor or chief of police might be invited to make a statement to the group of his policy of law enforcement. Certain members of the group should be delegated to prepare needed ordinances along the lines suggested in this chapter for later use in pushing the recreation program.

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CHAPTER IX

CONSTRUCTIVE PUBLIC OPINION

However effective in maintaining external order restrictive action may be, it clearly does not go to the root of the question. It alone cannot solve the problem of amusements in America. Public opinion must find a deeper answer to these issues than can ever be expressed in agitation or governmental regulation. Constructive public opinion offers more fundamental solutions; it strives to get at the deep-seated causes of the evils which have emerged and cut them off at their source. It seeks to discover the normal human desire which has been perverted in its expression, and to work for the natural and wholesome expression of that desire. It maps out a progressive program, and seeks to hold public opinion of the first type to a prolonged campaign and the support of thorough-going solutions. It would see the leisure time of all the people conserved for worthy ends and many friends of wholesome play are now hard at work in the mood of such constructive effort. They are achieving tangible results. They stake their case on the absolute validity and the fundamental importance in human life of the beneficent instinct of play.

1. PLAY, THE GOSPEL OF PLAY

Constructive public opinion starts its campaign with a deep and valiant belief in play. In season and out of season it preaches the gospel of play: an ample op-

portunity for wholesome pleasure for every man, woman and child in every home, store and factory in America, and the means of enjoying it to the full at least once every week. The gospel of play is the beginning of wisdom in this whole matter. Many minds in many centuries have misunderstood or denied the importance of play and looked upon it as a more or less permissible sin, rather than as a natural, right, and beautiful expression of the human spirit. This tragic misconception has made the earth a sombre place for countless millions. It is well to believe in play, for the love of it leaps up instinctively in every normal being. Whatever one does for the pure love of it, that is play. It is more instinctive than work and not a whit less important. A playless continent would be no more abnormal than a playless life. Play is for childhood the shining gate that opens wide to life, to sociability, endurance, cooperation, natural growth and the subordination of one's own desires to common ends. It leads out the youthful spirit through mysterious instinctive regions where no formal education can be its guide, and may indeed light up the meaning of government, and the moral order. For maturity, the shining gate swings backward, restoring joyous memories and the early freshness of boyhood's mornings, recreating body and soul, warding off nervous exhaustion, maintaining balance and proportion in life, making work tolerable for the oppressed, and releasing the worker to increased efficiency. It is well to believe in play, for morality and play grow up together like joyous children when play is spontaneous, unbought and clean.

America believes in play. That is manifest. The question at issue is the sort of play in which she be-

lieves, the sort of recreations which are to possess her leisure hours. These will shape the national character. Can she be led to believe completely in wholesome play? Constructive public opinion sets itself to produce the affirmative answer. Perhaps the most fundamental and enduring of all solutions of this problem lies in a universal adoption of the gospel of wholesome play, in the full development of private recreation as over against public—private in the sense that the crowd is avoided—that commercialized attractions are shunned and reliance placed upon plays and games in which personal skill, initiative, wit, and originality count.

We must remember, too, that joy comes to full fruition in the cultivation of music, art, literature and religion.

All these higher expressions of life, so often in the past the exclusive privilege of the rich, the educated, or the specially favored, are now possible for the whole mass of the people. There are indeed few facts of modern life so significant as the vast process by which the means of enjoyment have been democratized through scientific discoveries, mechanical inventions and modern organization. Never till the present has Pericles' ideal picture of Athenian recreation, as recorded by Thucydides, been capable of universal realization.

"And we have not forgotten to provide for our weary spirits many relaxations from toil; we have regular games and sacrifices throughout the year; at home the style of our life is refined; and the delight which we daily feel in all these things helps to banish melancholy. Because of the greatness of our city the fruits of the whole earth flow in upon us; so that we enjoy the goods of other countries as freely as of our own."[1]

[1] "Funeral speech of Pericles," B. Jowett, "Thucydides" (translated into English), v. 1, p. 118.

The spirit of youth never had a greater multitude of wholesome recreations, easy of access, than in America today. The constructive use of leisure time by all the people was never more possible than now.

It is in the achievement of these ideals of the gospel of play that the significance of amateur athletics in all their wide range as a solution of the problem is evident. By their very nature a sharp line is drawn against professionalism. The test of the amateur is freedom from personal commercialization. Commercialism is eliminated, therefore, when the rules are observed, and only in the case of spectacular teams or great institutions where enormous crowds attend the games does commercialization in management become a problem or harmful publicity develop. For the rest, the pure love of sport dominates the situation, and it is the inherent nature of successful sport to be morally clean. In it the taint of immorality is a fatal weakness. Amateur athletics thus become not only a magnificent expression of the play spirit, but a positive and effective opponent of the evil tendencies in prevalent amusements. It would be difficult to over-emphasize, therefore, the value of amateur baseball, football, boating, track games, tennis, swimming, tramping, and the like—these in the warmer months; and skating, bobbing, skiing, with handball, basketball, and other gymnasium games, in the winter months. The organization of these activities in schools and colleges and by athletic clubs and other organizations in the cities has high social value.

Add to organized athletics the wide variety of other private recreations, such as camping, riding and driving, the ancient and honorable picnic, fishing and hunting, the gentle art of gardening, photography, outings,

travel, woodcraft and nature study; and to these the pleasures of music, home games, private social parties, minstrel shows and amateur dramatics; and through them all trace the perennial joy of natural love and friendship. All these by their healthy vigor, their spontaneity and wit, their freedom from sordid commercialism, and their clean morality, may become the most far-reaching solution of our present problem. How vital are the restorations that work out in us when we play with joyous absorption! The gospel of play is the beginning of wisdom in this whole matter, and any parent, any person set in authority over young people, or any employer of labor, who turns a deaf ear to its appeal and clings to the worn out doctrine of repressing the play impulse, commits a grievous sin against society. On the other hand, those who use their power to enlarge the play life of young people and help to release their pent desires for healthy pleasure are among the saviours of the race. It is necessary to believe in play, despite the evils which fasten themselves about it—aye, the more for that very reason—for the spirit of youth and the spirit of life are killed where play is denied. The gospel of play has saved many souls that were cast down, wounded in our over-heated, over-speeded and under-ventilated order of industry, and sent them back to their jobs with the highly moral purpose to "hit the line hard," to "play fair" and "not to be quitters." Organized and competitive play is giving us much of the moral equivalent of war and vastly more that war could never give, and giving it, moreover, without war's horrors and brutalities. Constructive public opinion begins its crusade with the gospel of play.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. This is a subject for careful study—a study of books and people; a subject for careful thinking. Much has been written upon it, and yet the far-reaching benefits of well-ordered play are not generally understood. Books and articles among those listed in the bibliography should be read with care by members of the group. Brief reports should be given upon various topics such as: the relation of play to work; the relation of play to education; the relation of play to citizenship; the relation of play to moral development; the part of play in social life. Could we live together happily if we did not play together? Can you imagine a playless town? Are there any such towns in America? Is there any natural connection between play and loose morals? Is it true that "in the lower realm where religion and morality do not act, amusements and sports are the only effective motives to elevate men?" Can you suggest any new forms of play which would stir up people not used to playing, as golf stirred up a host of middle-aged men who had left off all games?

2. An interesting part of an hour may be spent in reporting and discussing favorite forms of recreation. What is your hobby among the sports and what does it do for you?

3. The group will be tempted at this point to discuss the play of children. To do so will be to get away from the main point under consideration.

4. Why do play and vice often go together? Has vice any right to the ownership of play or to companionship with it?

5. What is to be the future of play in those country districts where city amusements have as yet made small entrance? Will commercialism win out there also, or can public opinion be stirred and leadership provided for a wholesome recreation program?

2. EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE DRAMATIC GROUP

A. The Drama League and Similar Organizations

Constructive public opinion has already grappled with all phases of this problem. In the matter of the drama there have recently appeared spontaneous movements in several cities for freer and finer expressions of dramatic art. They are protests against the commercialization, the bad taste, and the bad morals of much recent drama and are likewise constructive efforts to improve conditions. Such are the Drama League of America, the New Theater and the Little Theater in New York, the Toy Theater in Boston, the Drama Society of Boston, The Chicago Dramatic Society, and the drama departments of women's clubs. A number of high class companies are fighting the same battle in devoting themselves to the best drama at risk of financial loss.

The Drama League of America is a national organization with a national program. It has not aimed to establish a negative censorship of the theater. Its object, on the other hand, has been

"To crowd out vicious plays by attending and commending good plays and building up audiences for them through study classes, reading circles and lectures; to aid in the restoration of the drama to its honorable place as the most intimate, the most comprehensive, most democratic medium for the self-expression of the people." "In furtherance of this object, there have been evolved two branches of activity, acting through committees, viz.: the education committee, which cultivates the dramatic taste of the audiences by the study and reading of plays

outside the theater, and the play-going committee, which aims to secure actual box-office support of worthy plays."[1]

The league also issues study courses, organizes children's drama clubs, interests teachers in drama study and in the league, prepares lists of plays for amateur acting clubs and otherwise seeks to create a public opinion which shall hold a balance of power to cast on the side of the best things.

"The Drama League . . . does not claim as yet to be able to make or mar a play—to dictate arbitrarily as to production; but it does hope as its influence grows in Night Stands to be able to support a League play so strongly in advance as to bring to many of the small towns better plays than they would otherwise get. It aims to discover for the manager the audience that will enjoy a given play and bring the manager, the play and the special audience together."[2]

"Last year in Chicago there were 150 plays—100 of these were musical comedies and, therefore, not noticed by the League. Of the other fifty, sixteen were approved by the League as worthy and bulletined. This will show a saving of attendance on thirty-four worthless plays, or more than two-thirds of all productions."[3]

"The league" now has "90,000 affiliated members, . . . and the work is reaching out in numberless directions, bearing upon schools, colleges, libraries, clubs and individuals, and dealing with play-attending, play-study, festivals, pageants, and all forms of dramatic literature; but always with the audience—not interfering with the other side of the footlights."[4]

". . . it has found the nation at large eager and ready to adopt the suggestion that the people must be roused to a realization of responsibility for national amusements, that it is only as the theater-going public asserts itself that we can have better

[1] "Progress of the Drama League," *The Drama*, November, 1911, p. 223.
[2] Mrs. A. Starr Best, in *The Drama*, February, 1914, p. 135.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 138.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149.

plays. . . . Given a receptive theater-going public definitely announcing its interest in good plays, the managers will quickly put on such plays; the dramatists will respond to the call, and the theater will be transformed. But first of all an organized audience must be created."[1]

B. The Movement for Amateur Dramatics

There is in America a wide, spontaneous interest in amateur dramatics. It expresses itself in plays presented by little groups of drama lovers in every type of community from the smallest villages to the most crowded sections of Chicago and New York. Sometimes acting the plays of the great dramatists, sometimes producing plays of their own, these little groups are centers of dramatic enthusiasm. They are frequently independent organizations in the community, but more often spring up in connection with a school, a settlement, a college or university. Their point of view is local rather than national and their purpose is dramatic expression rather than any direct effort to improve conditions in the commercial theater. They do not constitute an organized movement with a national propaganda like the Drama League, but are none the less significant. Indeed their very spontaneity, springing up as they do locally, makes them a true expression of the nation's love of drama, independent of the commercial theater. The plays they present may often be poorly acted from the viewpoint of the average audience, accustomed to professionals, but their acting, whatever its quality, is their own and a real expression of their love of art. This means freedom and democracy in art, and in the end good art as

[1] Mrs. A. Starr Best, in *The Drama*, February, 1914, pp. 136, 137.

well as sound morality. When true to the amateur spirit these groups stand for a fine correlation of all the agencies necessary to the production of a drama, the need of high-minded authors, managers, players, and audiences.

Such groups naturally come to their fullest expression where dramatic leadership is at its best, as often in a great university. Here are frequently found professors of dramatic literature, translators and playwrights of ability, capable managers, actors with talent, and appreciative audiences.

The purpose of the Wisconsin Dramatic Society, which seeks to unite groups of amateurs throughout the state, is "to raise the standard of dramatic appreciation in the community; to encourage the support of the best plays; to encourage the reading of good plays in English and in translation from other languages; to encourage the translation, composition, and publication of good plays; to conduct companies for the production of high class plays at a low price." Similarly The Dramatic League of New York City purposes "to promote in public schools, social centers, settlements, churches and other agencies amateur dramatic performances having an educational value."

The amateur dramatic movement as a whole is of deep significance in improving the status of drama in American life through fundamentally constructive action.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. What is the most immediate and effective way to improve dramatic conditions in "our town"? How would it do to cooperate in the use of the "white list" of the Drama League and

at the same time attempt to cultivate a more general appreciation of the best plays by reading and producing some of them in amateur dramatics?

2. A report should be given on the best available plays for amateurs.

C. Endowed and Civic Theaters

Privately endowed or municipal theaters are a further effort to improve theatrical conditions. They may properly be considered as a part of the amateur dramatic movement, as institutional centers for the cultivation and expression of dramatic art where a local school of actors and playwrights may be developed. The movement has made considerable progress in England and Germany and its purpose in America is said to be "the establishment of civic or municipal theaters where the best plays both classic and modern shall be given by a well-trained stock company at reasonable prices."

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. How has the need of a municipal theater been altered if at all by the spread of motion pictures?

2. How large a proportion of the population of "our town" would a municipal theater be likely to reach?

3. EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE SOCIAL RENDEZVOUS GROUP

As Seen in Social Settlements, Churches, Christian Associations, Social and Recreation Centers

Constructive public opinion in relation to the problems of the social rendezvous group affirms the validity of impulses to sociability just as it recognizes the place

and power of the dramatic impulse. It sees in the present congestion of home life in cities—in the abnormal conditions under which great numbers of young people are forced to work and play—the underlying causes of the evils emerging in public dance halls, cafés with amusement features, and similar resorts. It affirms that the widespread breakdown of character which occurs in these places is due less to inherent moral defects than to the rapacity of liquor dealers and the profit-seeking management of amusement enterprises. It points out the need of safeguarding every phase of social life from exploitation, and of counteracting the evils of loneliness, over-crowding, fatigue, and barren leisure. It exerts itself against promiscuous sociability, and endeavors to make adequate provision for safer social pleasures.

This type of public interest expresses itself in a varied provision for social life in settlement houses, churches, Christian Associations, social and recreation centers, and the like.

The social settlements, now numbering approximately 413 in the United States, have pointed the way toward solutions of the problem by establishing in congested districts their attractive neighborhood houses, open and inviting to the varied interests of the people. Social clubs and classes of every sort that find a response in the people's sense of need are offered and made as independent and democratic as possible. Opportunities for social life, often including dancing, are provided, and dancing in natural social groups in the midst of an attractive development of the varied interests of life subsides from the abnormal place it holds among many young people to its normal place.

The social life connected with churches of all denomi-

nations is a fact of primary importance when seen in relation to this problem. Those who desire the solution of social problems do well to remember that "There are in this country 218,147 churches with a membership of more than 35,000,000." [1] This means organized social life of the utmost significance.

In the churches the family group is still the natural unit, and great numbers of young people in city and country meet for social pleasures under the best conditions. The importance of this democratic yet safeguarded social life can hardly be over-emphasized. If the churches were to utilize to the full their natural advantages for the extension of their social activities and reassert with new power their established opposition to class distinctions and their historic emphasis upon the religious life as a life of joy, they could take the lead among the constructive agencies active on this phase of the problem.

The Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations have rapidly increased to the number of 2,357 for young men in the United States and Canada, and 949 for young women in the United States. These Associations make an important contribution by their provision of dormitory life and social opportunities. Their attractive buildings contain facilities for various gymnasium activities and games, lectures, concerts, amateur theatricals, and friendly gatherings. They help to create and maintain standards of social morality.

The Young Men's Associations are in direct competition with pool halls and "hangouts" for men, and the reported use of city Association buildings or rooms by

[1] R. Fulton Cutting, "The Church and Society," p. 2.

625,598 members in 1913 indicates the effectiveness of their rivalry.

The significance of the many leagues, fraternities, secret orders and social clubs for men, and likewise the National Guard as a social organization, should be fully appreciated.

The movement for the wider use of school buildings has rapidly assumed national significance. These buildings are already owned by the people themselves in their corporate capacity, and represent in the aggregate vast sums of money which are yielding annually but a fraction of the return which the community may justly expect from them. The Russell Sage Foundation reports the results of a questionnaire covering the development of social centers for 1912-13 as follows:

"Cities reporting some paid workers, 71; cities in which board of education provided heat, light and janitor service, 126. Expenditures reported, $324,575." "While the number of cities reporting paid workers has not quite doubled, the amount of the expenditures reported is nearly two and a half times as great as it was in 1911-12."

The recreation features of social centers vary of course with the character of the community, but usually include such activities as public lectures, literary and musical clubs, handicraft or domestic science classes, athletics, game rooms, reading rooms, neighborhood nights, old-fashioned sociables, and dancing parties, all conducted under supervision. Meetings for the discussion of neighborhood interests and public questions naturally grow out of this closer association of neighbors and fellow-townsmen.

The rapidly increasing popularity of social centers

has been traced to their character as neighborhood institutions, to the freedom afforded the individual, his sense of ownership, and the active rather than passive character of the place. It helps to develop the spontaneous interests of the neighborhood. It is apparent that this movement, as yet in its infancy, is to bulk large in the social and recreational life of the future if the centers are carefully supervised and their activities guided by those who understand social needs. It promises, indeed, to offer a fundamental contribution to the solution of our problem. The cooperation of public libraries with all social and recreation centers in establishing branch libraries is highly desirable.

The development of artistic dancing—folk dances and the like—in the settlements and recreation centers, is the most direct effort of recent years to restore an appreciation of the dance as a form of art, and to offer a corrective to excesses in the modern dances.

All of these agencies, however, are far from adequate to meet the situation as a whole. Many groups of young people have little or no relation with any of them and conduct their social affairs in public halls rented for each occasion. This is the common method for social club dances, and many such clubs protect the privacy of their affairs by rigidly excluding outsiders, by providing chaperones and other safeguards. They help greatly in this way to avoid the evils of promiscuous dancing as found in commercial places.

The city of Chicago has attractive halls in its public parks which are leased to private parties under careful regulation and with great success. This plan of giving the use of the assembly halls in the field houses to societies or groups, instead of to individuals or to the gen-

eral public, aids in solving the problem of promiscuous acquaintance and attendant evils. "Anybody is welcome but anybody must belong to some social body before anybody can come."

This principle is fundamentally different from that upon which the experiment of a general municipal dance in the largest available building has sometimes been attempted, for in the latter all groups are merged, and social promiscuity is given free reign.

Of the Chicago provisions Miss Addams says:

"The free rent in the park to all, the good food in the park restaurant, supplied at cost, have made three parties closing at eleven o'clock no more expensive than one party breaking up at daylight, too often in disorder. Is not this an argument that the drinking, the late hours, the lack of decorum, are directly traceable to the commercial enterprise which ministers to pleasure in order to drag it into excess because excess is more profitable? To thus commercialize pleasure is as monstrous as it is to commercialize art. It is intolerable that the city does not take over this function of making provision for pleasure. . . ."[1]

The fifteenth annual report of the City Superintendent of Schools of New York City contains the following upon social centers:

"The demeanor of the young men has continued to be most exemplary. The men in attendance have constituted themselves guardians of the peace and have been careful that the behavior of all who attended should be beyond criticism. . . . All agree that in the public school dancing classes we have the strongest weapon with which to oppose the evils of the public dance halls."

The Milwaukee Survey shows that about one-eighth of those in public dance halls were "in good surround-

[1] Jane Addams, "The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets," pp. 97-98.

ings, in carefully supervised dancing academies and in family gatherings, in halls where older people of the neighborhood were in attendance." This quotation would seem to indicate that dancing academies in general if carefully supervised, as they are not, in fact, ordinarily, might be a help in solving the dance hall problem. It also makes clear the more important fact that the restoration of social dancing to its place as a private recreation where parents or other older persons are present, in family gatherings or small social groups, and where promiscuous acquaintance is avoided, is a restoration to its natural place.

The cultivation of private social parties properly conducted should indeed be recognized at its full value. However important may be the contribution of the agencies described above, they can do little more than point the way toward solutions of the problem. The social recreations of the people will continue to be for the most part financially independent and conducted by natural social groups. Even in the poorer districts of the larger cities, these groups will continue to be socially independent and self-sustaining.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Do these organizations, most of which were formed primarily for other purposes, have a direct bearing on the improvement of social recreation? In how many of them in "our town" could the social features be more highly developed? Would this make them more attractive to young people?

2. Discuss the general importance of a well-developed selective social life.

3. Are our schoolhouses giving the citizens full return for the money that goes into them? How could we extend their use?

4. Discuss the principles involved in group dancing versus public dancing. Do you approve the principle of giving the use of public assembly halls to societies or well defined groups instead of to individuals or the general public?

5. Do you see any possibilities in the solution of the dance situation in a fuller development of folk dances and other forms requiring the participation of a number of people, such as the old-fashioned square dances and Virginia reel?

4. EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE ATHLETIC GROUP AND COMMERCIAL AMUSEMENT PLACES

As Seen in Public Parks, Playgrounds, and the Recreation Movement

Constructive public opinion has long been at work in the establishment of public parks and playgrounds, springing originally out of a desire to beautify the cities, and to relieve the evils of congestion. As a recreation movement it is now becoming conscious of its significance in the general reconstruction of city life. We have already splendid examples of public parks with playgrounds and recreation centers, properly supervised, that are able to compete effectively with commercial amusement parks and similar resorts, and to provide for free and wholesome expression of the spirit of play. The significance of these developments can hardly be overestimated. Open air, sunlight, and a place to play bring social and spiritual gifts as surely as they bring physical releases.

The recreation and social centers in parks and schoolhouses are rapidly carrying us toward new expressions of democracy. Their significance, and the value of the

supervised recreation conducted in them grows each year more apparent. The vast process of social education is largely dependent upon organized recreation, and social education in cities is finding an open space, a standing ground and rallying point in public parks and playgrounds. They supply a physical base upon which neighborhood consciousness and cooperation may develop. They supply facilities for carrying out a city's recreation program, and are more and more systematically developed as the cities become more awake to their value.

There are many extensive park and playground systems in the leading cities of the nation, notably, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo and San Francisco.

Three hundred forty-two cities in the United States and Canada were reported in 1913 to be maintaining 2,402 regularly supervised playgrounds and recreation centers at a total expenditure of $5,700,223.81, and to be employing 6,318 workers.[1]

Playground commissions which have been organized in a number of cities have rendered invaluable service. From the point of view of this study, the South Park system in Chicago is especially noteworthy as the most conspicuous expression of conscious effort to meet a great city's recreational needs with adequate provision, and this despite the fact that it has been done apart from the school buildings of the city, and thus entailed a very large additional cost. Besides the more usual park features of walks, drives, lakes, stands for public music, the museum and the zoo, these parks show certain distinctive features which are thus described:

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[1] *The Playground*, January, 1914.

"A typical center includes both outdoor and indoor activities. The outdoor activities comprise as the central feature a liberally planned bathing pool, with sand banks, dressing rooms, cleansing showers, life guards and bathing suits. Collateral to this are an outdoor gymnasium for men, another for women, another for boys, another for girls, running tracks, wading pools, and sand courts for the youngsters; also tennis courts and ball fields —turned into skating rinks in the winter time. The interior features include a thoroughly equipped gymnasium for men, another for women, each having a trained director and being furnished with baths and lockers, a lunch room, reading and library room, one or two small club rooms for small gatherings and a large and beautiful assembly hall for neighborhood meetings, lectures or pleasure parties."[1]

It is especially noteworthy from the point of view of our study that these provisions are not limited to children. We are here particularly concerned with the problems of those young people who have passed the age of childhood, who are possessed by the virility and vehemence of youth, whose lives are full of the "red flare of dreams." The public must make attractive provision for their outdoor activities if they are to be shown a better way than that into which commercial amusement parks now allure them in countless numbers. Society must not only restrict and repress the evil features of amusement offerings; it must let loose the springs of joy and gladness in a thousand natural ways for these young people under wholesome conditions.

This requires not only the provision of ample public facilities for outdoor recreation, but also fidelity to the principle that athletic games shall not be played merely to win nor as an end in themselves. A deeper need of

[1] "Chicago Playgrounds and Park Centers," *The City Club Bulletin*, March 4, 1908, v. 2, No. 1, p. 3.

society is met when play in all its forms is made to serve as a means to all-round health, development, and happiness; when it is made to stimulate and unify community life. The end of athletics is more than hard muscles and physical health, more than winning games or developing a few star players; it is nothing less than a broad service to citizenship, to the larger social needs of all the people.

With city congestion as serious as it is, and the exploitation of happiness what it is, society must increasingly fulfil its duty to utilize to their utmost the places already provided, in order that youth may come into its rightful heritage. This means not only the full social use of all parks and playgrounds as now established, but also more recreation centers, especially devised to meet the needs of young people, recreation piers, baths and bathing beaches, skating rinks, playing fields, theaters for amateurs, and assembly halls where athletic and social life may find full expression.

The recreation movement recognizes, however, that it is not enough to provide these places and leave young people to frequent them without guidance in the pleasures which develop there. The supervision of activities is, after all, the essential element, without which the facilities provided are often worse than wasted. Only as counsellors and play leaders of tact and wisdom, men and women of rich personality, are brought into touch with young people will recreation be sure to bring youth out into a rich maturity. Only thus will the "upper ends" of play bear fruit in citizenship and community spirit.

Volunteer and paid workers alike have a permanent work to do. The country needs the play-leader, espe-

cially the volunteer, to save its youth from social isolation, and to cultivate the full realization of a common life. The city needs play-leaders, both volunteer and professional, for the city has become the house and home of countless young people who are forced out between meals from the tiny flats in which they eat and sleep. In the break-up of home life which this involves, the play-leader becomes the big brother or sister of the great city household. The gifts which these leaders develop will largely settle the question of whether the city is to give to youth a reasonable chance for real pleasure, or whether it shall continue to have "streets full of young people recklessly seeking pleasure, frequently choosing evil disguised as pleasure." It is this high quality of play-leadership which, in the actual out-working of the recreation movement, will largely determine the effectiveness of public facilities for recreation in competition with commercial amusement resorts and parks. If the best public opinion and moral responsibility can actually control the supervision of these facilities and take the lead in public recreation, then low commercial offerings can be either driven out or forced to raise their standards.

The Playground and Recreation Association of America renders a national service in working for the full ideal of recreation. It cooperates in making recreation surveys of cities, in fostering the establishment of comprehensive systems of recreation, in locating play-leaders and supervisors, in giving general information about recreation, and in stimulating public interest in all related questions. Twenty-six organizations in New York, with some of which recreation is only an incidental purpose, are cooperating in the Recreation Alliance of New York City. It is prophetic of the cooperative action of the

future. Its purpose is declared as this: "To be a center of intercommunication for the various organizations interested in recreation in New York City. To foster harmonious relations between them and prevent overlapping of work. To draw up a comprehensive plan for work in New York City, recommend the adoption of this plan and endeavor to secure the cooperation of the various organizations in carrying out the plan agreed upon."

Constructive public opinion, persistent and effective, must now fight out on such lines as these whether wholesome amusement, under reasonable guidance, can be made to "go" with young people under the abnormal conditions of city life. Every community must answer for itself this question: Have professional, commercial, and immoral influences gained the mastery in the amusement situation in our town, or can we yet rescue this great and beautiful portion of life to a free and spontaneous expression, that it, in turn, may lead the way to the highest social values? Public morality is at stake in this struggle, and is to be reckoned as a value not less sacred, surely, than public health or safety.

It is a prophetic picture which Miss Addams paints in her "Spirit of Youth and the City Streets":

"Many Chicago citizens who attended the first annual meeting of the National Playground Association of America will never forget the long summer day in the large playing field filled during the morning with hundreds of little children romping through the kindergarten games, in the afternoon with the young men and girls contending in athletic sports; and the evening light made gay by the bright-colored garments of Italians, Lithuanians, Norwegians, and a dozen other nationalities, reproducing their old dances and festivals for the pleasure of the more stolid Americans. Was this a forecast of what we may yet see accomplished through a dozen agencies promoting public

recreation which are springing up in every city of America, as they are already found in the large towns of Scotland and England?

"Let us cherish these experiments as the most precious beginnings of an attempt to supply the recreational needs of our industrial cities. To fail to provide for the recreation of youth is not only to deprive all of them of their natural form of expression, but is certain to subject some of them to the overwhelming temptation of illicit and soul-destroying pleasures. To insist that young people shall forecast their rose-colored future only in a house of dreams is to deprive the real world of that warmth and reassurance which it so sorely needs and to which it is justly entitled."[1]

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Has the recreation movement become self-conscious and organized in "our town"?
2. Are our parks and playgrounds returning full social value?
3. How many additional play spaces could be found and utilized in "our town"? What is the next most needed provision for public recreation?
4. Discuss the significance of play leadership in the public education of the future.
5. What does the play leader find it easy to do which the teacher in the classroom finds it hard to do?
6. What fundamental changes in the national life will the recreation movement help to produce?

5. EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF SPECIAL AMUSEMENT EVENTS

As Seen in Holiday Celebrations, Community Festivals, Field Days, Fairs and Pageants

The charm of the special day devoted to happiness is deeply significant in our civic life. It answers one of

[1] Jane Addams, in "The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets," pp. 102-103.

the oldest needs of man, and of no one more than men and women working at high speed in mechanical drudgery for long hours of daily labor. It is this which lends to the observance of Sunday as a rest day an intense significance in an industrial social order. Just as there is no exploitation of pleasure more iniquitous than the exploitation of holidays, there is no movement of constructive public opinion more beneficent than that for the worthy celebration of holidays, the movement for community festivals, field days, fairs, and pageants.

The emotional life of the race cannot be registered by the time clock at the factory gate. It floods the free spaces of the day, the week, and suffuses every holiday. It is this that makes them holy days. Those who capture the holidays of men for clean and wholesome pleasures, strike a body blow at commercialism and vice. It is, therefore, highly significant that the festival holiday movement has spread rapidly in recent years and won for itself an enduring place among effective social agencies.

The insane Fourth has rapidly given way to the sane. The celebration of the day has become enriched as a civic festival incorporating many forms of public recreation and noble demonstrations of patriotism. In 1908 four cities are reported as celebrating sanely; in 1913 there were 394. In 1908 there were 5,623 accidents reported; in 1913 the number was reduced to 1,163.

The distinctive values of Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays, Memorial Day, and others variously celebrated, give to the year no small portion of its national sentiment. Worthy celebrations of all these days are a

primary duty of public opinion in every community in the land.

How many beautiful values can be made to live for all mankind by gaily marching children, by youths contending in athletic games, by maidens winding 'round the Maypole, by lively music quickening and dissolving the quaint formations of the folk dances, by free families released to wander with romping children through the parks or over the green of the countryside! What courage in the Nation's heart may not be stirred by reverent celebration of her dead! What daring hopes in the hearts of men may not be freed by rockets blazing skyward in the night! Who yet has told the Nation all the values of her holidays?

The movement for festival pageants came to us from England, where they were revived in 1905. It has rapidly spread throughout the Nation, quickening civic enthusiasm, and revealing unused resources for the celebration of local and national holidays. Among the early pageants in the smaller cities and villages were those at Bronxville, New York; Gloucester, Massachusetts; New Britain, Connecticut; Thetford and St. Johnsbury, Vermont; Ripon, Wisconsin; and Evanston, Illinois. Notable among the pageants in larger cities have been those in Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Brooklyn, and Milwaukee. Perhaps the most spectacular of all was the Hudson-Fulton Celebration at New York in 1912.

Pageantry also played a notable part in the Alaska-Yukon Exposition, and will be a conspicuous feature of the Panama Exposition in San Francisco in 1915, where 52 acres are to be set aside for carefully selected amusement enterprises.

The New Orleans Mardi Gras is the chief survivor in

America of a type of the festivals of earlier days, chiefly Spanish in their origin.

The principal features of pageants are tableaux of historical or allegorical significance, presented usually either on floats in street processions, or in an outdoor amphitheater. In its fuller development, the community pageant presents its episodes accompanied by music, dances, songs, conversations and speeches. It relies almost wholly on local talent, and uses large numbers of people in the presentation. The tableaux frequently present in succession the outstanding facts of local history in a wide variety of scenes, as the following, for example, from Oxford, Mass.:

"The scenes of the pageant began with a prologue, the years 1674-1704, and covering the early history of Oxford. The first scene was John Eliot's visit to Manchaug, the Indian name of Oxford. The second scene was the coming of the Huguenots, the first white settlers. Then followed the presentation of land, the Johnson Massacre, and the departure of the Huguenots, fleeing before the savages. The first episode, 1713-1717, showed the life of the English in Oxford, in the following scenes: Scene I, The Coming of the English; Scene II, Life in the Colony; Scene III, Troublesome Times.

"The second episode covered the period of the Revolution, 1775, and the years that followed to 1800: Scene I, Minute Men; Scene II, Funeral Honors for Washington; Scene III, The Visit of Major General Hamilton.

"The third episode began at 1690 and illustrated the rise of industries. The fourth episode dealt with the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865: Scene I, The Departure of the 'DeWitt Guards.' Scene II, 'The Angel of the Battlefield.' Epilogue, Oxford: Past, Present and Future."

Three facts are of special significance in the relation of the pageant to the amusement problem: first, its reliance upon a large body of amateurs, under the direc-

tion of professional trainers, but not supplanted by them; second, its freedom from the commercial motive, the returns above expenses being used ordinarily for community interests; and, third, its inherently moral atmosphere. It may well stand as our best illustration of the highest type of organized play.

The social values of pageantry are many and far-reaching. Besides the enduring memory of beautiful pictures, a new pride in local history is awakened, and this in turn brings community interest and loyalty. Prejudice and social cleavage give way to neighborly feeling. The participation of hundreds of people in the acting brings a new sense of the value of cooperative effort. The participation of school children has high educational value in its training of artistic expression.

Like all other forms of art, pageantry serves to interpret life as a whole, and in an age predominantly social an art so essentially social as pageantry must have fundamental significance. It quickens appreciation of all the poetry of life—so sadly neglected in America—and deepens the spiritual significance of historic events and national memories.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. Discuss the peculiar importance of worthy celebrations of holidays. Why are days of special pleasure so memorable?

2. A brief paper on modern pageantry should be presented. Would it be possible for our group to hold an open-air play or start a pageant for "our town"?

3. A brief statement should be made of the values of entertainment programs in Chautauqua or other circuits in certain sections of the country. These frequently last a week in each town in the summer.

4. A brief statement should be made of the contribution made by secret and religious orders in their processions through the streets in full regalia.

5. How much of the glamour that has been thrown around war, by bands and flags and marching men, is a part of the charm of pageantry rather than of war?

6. CITY DEPARTMENTS OF RECREATION

"We continually forget how new the modern city is and how short the span of time in which we have assumed that we can eliminate from public life public recreation. The Greeks and Romans held games to be an integral part of patriotism. It would be interesting to trace how far this thoughtless conclusion (that the modern city need not provide recreation) is responsible for the vicious excitements and trivial amusements which in a modern city so largely take the place formerly supplied by public recreation and manly sports. It would be illuminating to know the legitimate connection between lack of public facilities for decent pleasures and our present social immoralities."[1]

In the spirit of these words, constructive public opinion is active in the establishment of city departments of recreation, coordinating with other branches of city government. A few cities have already established such departments, and there is now a rapidly developing extension of this movement. If these departments are put under the supervision of men and women who recognize, on the one hand, the social and moral enormity of much that is now urged upon young people under amusement labels, and who have, on the other hand, an unshakable faith in the young people who pass under their supervision, we may expect far-reaching results.

[1] C. R. Henderson, "Preventive Agencies and Methods," quoting Jane Addams, p. 380.

The development and administration of these departments of recreation present many problems, for the available buildings and equipment are often under the control of other departments of the city government, such as the park boards and boards of education. In treating the forms of administration now in use, Rowland Haynes makes important suggestions in The Recreation Survey of Kansas City, Mo., and a classification of administrative work is given:

"By public recreation is meant some form of supervised recreation. Parks laid out primarily to beautify the city and used for auto drives, picnic parties, etc., furnish valuable recreation, but this sort is distinguished from supervised recreation in the form of playgrounds, field houses, and recreation centers. This distinction is made even in cities where the supervision of these facilities is in the same hands as the supervision of the parks built primarily for beauty. The administrative work of public recreation falls under three heads: facilities, care-taking, and supervision. By facilities are meant grounds, buildings, and equipment, both in the form of permanent apparatus and perishable supplies. By care-taking is meant all forms of attendant services, both for grounds and buildings, such as janitors, field house attendants, bath attendants, and the like. Under supervision is included all forms of instruction service such as club leaders, playground supervisor, directors, and part-time assistants, recreation center directors, and the like."

The classification of forms of administration is as follows:

1. Under one form of administration facilities, caretaking and supervision are all under control of some board primarily created for some other purpose, such as the school board or the park board.

2. A second type of administration puts the conduct of all public recreation in the hands of a board or com-

mission created expressly for that purpose. The facilities and supervision are under this one board, which is a separate and independent board with powers of control over the properties placed in its charge.

3. The third form is joint action, in two ways, as follows:

"Under the first form of this type of administration the facilities are under the control of the boards to whose care these facilities were originally entrusted. The supervision is put in the hands of one of these boards, namely, a board primarily created for some other purpose. The second form of joint action is like the first, except that the supervision is put in the hands of a board expressly created to carry on supervised recreation."

"Some form of the joint action type of administration is inevitable in any comprehensive plan for a city's recreation, because such a comprehensive plan requires the use of facilities which are used part of the time for other purposes. To get unity in the system under joint action, provision has to be made for cooperation of various boards in the matter of facilities and for the supervision of recreational activities under one head. The control of facilities and of supervision cannot be in all cases under the same board because, while several boards contribute facilities, it is impossible, except in a small city, for several boards to contribute supervision and still have unity in the supervision."

The outstanding importance of the recreation superintendent is made clear by Mr. Haynes in a report on Rochester's needs. He writes:

"The securing of a well-trained, experienced and capable recreation superintendent, giving his entire time to the recreation problem in the city, having general oversight of all the recreation work, and with power to carry out measures of efficiency, —this is the fundamental and most urgent need. It is even more important than working out a method of administration. As

nearly as we can estimate the task of a recreation superintendent in Rochester—as the work stands at present, without any developments—it is equivalent to the task of running a school with an enrollment of 4,249. . . . If the work develops as it should, the task of the recreation superintendent will become as large and as important as that of the superintendent of schools at present."

The final recommendation of the California report is:

"That the system of maintaining separate park commissions and playground commissions be abolished, and that in their stead, public recreation commissions be created, which public recreation commissions shall have complete control and supervision over all places and forms of public and commercialized recreation."

What large results may the public expect from the establishment of recreation departments in city government? Our study would lead us to hope that they might serve the double need for restrictive and constructive action.

First, there should be such regulation of commercial enterprises as will make impossible the glaring evils now associated with many of them (an immediate result to be desired), restrictive action on a high level of intelligence, artistic appreciation, and moral dignity.

Second, there should be such a far-reaching constructive program as will include the provision and use of adequate facilities for public recreation, and its sympathetic supervision. This may rightly be expected.

May we not look to city recreation departments for civic theaters expressive of our common life? May we not look to them for social and recreation centers wisely supervised? May we not look to them for the fostering of universal athletics? May we not look to them for the

provision and utilization of public parks and playing fields, little and large? May we not look to them for worthy pageants and public festivals? *We may, if we look to ourselves for these things after the fashion of a democracy.*

We may indeed rightly expect them to take the lead in the high art of social education—the stimulation of common action and community consciousness. If they are well administered they may make no less a contribution to our common life than is now being made by those responsible for formal education. They will be dealing with equally significant activities of the human spirit, and may guide it to joyous releases by the unifying power of organized recreation. They may, if they will, lead the way to the new city state, to the new day of free cities, free with a new freedom, outshining those of ancient Greece—to the commonwealth of the future in which the uses of leisure shall be no less effective than the uses of labor in the service of the common good.

Suggestions for Thought and Discussion

1. How shall we meet the objection that a city department of recreation costs the taxpayers more money? Is it justifiable even if it does? Where could money be saved by a thorough recreation program?
2. What administrative problems would have to be solved in "our town"?
3. What organization is now doing the largest part of the work properly belonging to a recreation department?
4. Is there fundamental opposition to the policy of the public provision of recreation? Where does it come from?

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Endowed and Civic Theaters

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Israels, B. L. "Another Aspect of the Children's Theater." *Charities and the Commons,* January 4, 1908, v. 11, pp. 1310-1311.

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Crawford, Caroline. "Folk Dances and Games." Barnes, 1908. $1.50.

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Flitch, J. E. C. "Modern Dancing and Dancers." Lippincott, 1913. $3.75.

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Gulick, L. H. "Healthful Art of Dancing." 1910.

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Mero, E. B., editor. "American Playgrounds." Boston American Gymnasia Co., 1908. $1.50.

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"Playground and Recreation Association of America." Normal course in play for professional directors. New York, published by the Association. 20c.

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Lee, Joseph. "Boston's Playground System." *New England Magazine,* January, 1903, v. 27, n. s. pp. 521-536.

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"Parks and Recreation Facilities in the United States." *Annals of the American Academy,* March, 1910, v. 35, pp. 217-322.

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"The Year Book." *The Playground.* January, 1914, v. 7, No. 10.

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Holiday Celebrations, Community Festivals, Field Days, Fairs and Pageants

Books

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"Designed for the use of schools and colleges. All pageants are so divided that they may be given as a whole or as individual episodes. No pains have been spared to make each episode historically accurate, spirited and artistic. Six chapters on staging, costuming, organizing, sources and writing of amateur pageants and plays." R. S. F. Rec. Bib.

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Scudder, M. T. "The Field Day and Play Picnic for Country Children." New York Charities Publication Committee, 1907. 10c.

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Impressions of a visitor at the New Orleans Mardi Gras.

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"Country Fair as an Exhibition Center." *Craftsman,* September, 1911, v. 20, pp. 581-588.

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"Festivals and Pageants." *The Playground,* February, 1911, v. 4, No. 11. 25c.

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Rock, F. J. "Mardi Gras Days and the Mardi Gras City." *Overland,* March, 1907, n. s., v. 49, pp. 199-204.
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The work done by the state Harvest Festivals to advance industrial welfare.

Lord, Katherine. "To Give a Pageant in a Small Town." *Ladies' Home Journal,* February, 1913, v. 30, p. 24.

MacKay, Hazel. "Outdoor Plays and Pageants." *Independent,* June 2, 1910, v. 68, pp. 1227-1234.
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Gives valuable suggestions on the production of pageants.

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"New Orleans Mardi Gras." *Outlook,* March 28, 1908, v. 88, pp. 679-680.

Interpretation of the Mardi Gras.

"Pageant of Old Deerfield." *Outlook,* October 4, 1913, v. 105, pp. 277-279.

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A Mount Holyoke college pageant.

Riis, Jacob. "Rescuing Our National Festivals." *Craftsman,* February, 1913, v. 23, pp. 496-500.

Community Christmas trees and other festivals.

"Spectator. Pageant at Thetford." *Outlook,* September 30, 1911, v. 99, pp. 289-291.

Interprets the significance of a country town pageant led by a minister.

Stanley, R. A. "A County Fair Uplift." *Country Life,* August, 1913, v. 24, p. 52.

A New York county fair is revolutionized.

Scudder, Myron. "Organized Play in the Country." *Charities and the Commons,* August 3, 1907, v. 18, pp. 547-556.

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Local pride and social improvement.

Wiggin, K. D. "How We Attracted Two Thousand People to a County Fair." *Ladies' Home Journal,* July, 1912, v. 29, p. 15.

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A successful California pageant.

City Departments of Recreation

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Periodicals

Addams, Jane. "Recreation as a Public Function in Urban Communities." *American Journal of Sociology,* March, 1912, v. 17, pp. 615-619.
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Braucher, H. S. "How to Aid the Cause of Public Recreation." *American City,* April, 1913, v. 8, pp. 367-371.
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A significant movement.

PART III

SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

CHAPTER X

SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

1. THE AMUSEMENT SITUATION IN GENERAL

The first duty of any group of citizens who desire to improve conditions in their own community is to learn the facts of the amusement situation as it exists in their midst. Wise action can only proceed on a definite basis of fact.

Getting reliable facts may mean:

1. A recreation survey similar to those listed in the bibliography. If this is done thoroughly by an expert, the report should embrace not only an accurate statement of conditions, but also the outline of a recreation program in a series of comprehensive suggestions. There should be full correspondence in regard to local problems with the Playground and Recreation Association of America, 1 Madison Ave., New York City, or with the Recreation Department of the Russell Sage Foundation, 130 East 22d St., New York City.

2. Communities which are unable to undertake a survey covering all forms of recreation may well undertake an investigation covering some single phase of the problem—perhaps the one in which the worst evils seem to

exist. It may be limited as closely as may seem desirable, either to a single type of institutions, e. g., pool halls, or to a single institution such as a burlesque theater. An amusement park might well be taken as showing a complex of problems in one place. This is, of course, a less comprehensive method than that of the general survey, and likewise less expensive. It should be looked upon as a beginning only. No generalizations covering the whole amusement situation can be made from it, yet valuable public interest and action may be set in motion by it. Careful work should be done by reliable persons in getting the facts so that there may be a body of accurate information on the basis of which future action may be taken. This information should be of such a character as to be usable for evidence in court procedure.

The following suggestions for restrictive and constructive action are only a few among the many that might be made. They are set down as illustrative only of what is being done and may be done by groups of people acting from many and varied points of view:

Restrictive Action

Restrictive action has its sources of power in the laws of the state, the ordinances of the city, the executive regulations of officials, or the public action of groups of citizens. The essential requirement for this type of action, therefore, in addition to that cited above, is a knowledge of laws, ordinances and regulations, as operative in relation to amusement enterprises. With a knowledge of conditions, and a knowledge of laws and ordinances in force, a group of citizens is prepared for such restrictive action as it may decide upon deliberation to take.

Restrictive action may be of several kinds:

1. An appeal in the name of the group may be made to the mayor, the chief of police, or other official, to enforce the law, on the basis of facts laid before them.

2. An appeal may be made to the district or city attorney to prosecute the offending parties on behalf of the state or city.

3. Pressure may be brought upon public officials to do their full duty by public presentation of the evils to which the community is exposed in violation of law. This may be done in mass meetings, where public speaking and the use of literature are the chief factors. Political opposition to the reelection of officials who refuse to enforce the laws and political support of candidates pledging themselves for such enforcement are frequently effective.

4. The effort to secure the passage of more adequate laws or ordinances involves ordinarily the public presentation of the proposed legislation, in order that public support may be gained; the introduction of well-drawn bills, under friendly auspices, into the legislative body, their favorable report by the committee to which they are assigned; final favorable passage and signature by the governor or mayor.

5. There is a valuable form of restrictive action by which it is frequently possible to secure a desired result in a particular instance. That is, for a group of citizens—the more influential the better—to take up directly with the management of the offending enterprise the complaints which they desire to make, and seek to enlist the cooperation of the management in remedying conditions. A surprising degree of cooperation can sometimes be secured. Where cooperation is not readily

forthcoming, it is well to remember that commercial management is always dependent on public favor. Any public opinion which has power enough to make itself felt through the pocketbook receives attention.

Constructive Action

The procedure in constructive action is a less direct attack upon specific evils. It is rather an attempt to provide in wholesome surroundings for the normal expression of a pleasure which has been abused or perverted by commercial or vicious influences. This involves an acquaintance with various forms of constructive action which have been taken elsewhere or which may be supposed to aid in producing better conditions. Our study has sketched some of the efforts now directed to these ends. All of them are capable of local adaptation and development. Specific suggestions are made in the following pages. A comprehensive program covering various phases of effort may well be made. The closest possible cooperation should be maintained between those who naturally work restrictively and those who prefer to work constructively. Frequently they will be the same group of persons working by the two methods for a single end.

The beginning of constructive action in any community lies in a full appreciation of the value of play. This is the basic fact upon which to build a recreation program. The people must be led to believe in play, to believe that "our town" must have better organized, better supervised play. Especially must it have *more* play. To preach the gospel of wholesome play in lectures and public discussions, in the press, and by ex-

ample, may be the first duty of any group of interested citizens. Make it vigorous and attractive. In villages and country districts lethargy and the lack of leadership are the main factors in the problem. To foster every sort of wholesome private recreation under high grade leadership, to work out a play program, to quicken clean athletic sports and field days, a town festival—these will make for health and happiness, for friendliness and community loyalty in "our town" as well as elsewhere. The play program will have many elements and rely upon many cooperating groups of citizens, but it ought as far as possible to be in the hands of young people and have their enthusiastic approval and participation. It ought to be a democratic expression of their interests in building community loyalty.

2. THE DRAMATIC GROUP

Restrictive Action

1. Cooperation with the theater management may be secured by a group of citizens, and an effort made to eliminate the offensive play or plays.

2. An appeal may be made to the mayor or chief of police to enforce the law.

3. An appeal may be made to the district attorney to bring suit. The end sought in this action is usually the revocation of the license and the punishment of the responsible persons. One difficulty involved in taking direct action against a particular theatrical production is that publicity follows, and attracts a certain type of public, so that audiences often increase and little or nothing is accomplished. Action covering more than one production is essential.

4. An effort may be made to secure the appointment of one or more censors, who shall have power to pass on productions before they are put before the public. In motion pictures a local censorship board may be established by joint action of the various managers, the city government and interested citizens.

5. Public support may be enlisted for the passing of such measures as that eliminating vaudeville from motion picture shows, young children from participation in theatrical productions, and similar reforms.

Constructive Action

1. The production of the best plays may be fostered by the drama league or similar plan, and dramatic taste be cultivated by lectures and discussions.

2. Amateur theatricals may be developed through dramatic reading circles and the acting of original plays or those by the best dramatists.

3. Interest in an endowed theater for amateurs may be quickened.

4. The educational uses of motion pictures may be magnified, and their use extended to the schools and parks.

3. THE SOCIAL RENDEZVOUS GROUP

Restrictive Action

1. Cooperation may be secured by a group of citizens with the management of a public dance hall, café with amusement features, or other institution of this group to preserve better order, eliminate the sale of liquor to minors or in places where it is forbidden by

law, the prevention of immoral dancing, gambling and soliciting by immoral women or men, and similar reforms.

2. An appeal may be made to the mayor, chief of police, or other official to enforce the law or city ordinances in respect to evils arising in places of this type.

3. An appeal may be made to the district or city attorney to bring suit.

Constructive Action

1. Support may be given to restaurants and cafés which do not offer unwholesome amusement features.

2. Full support may be given to all such institutions as social settlements, churches, Christian Associations, lodges and social clubs, which maintain a high-grade social life of their own.

3. Selective social life upon high levels and in good surroundings may be fostered among all groups of young people.

4. The use of public halls may be rendered unnecessary by the provision and group use of social centers and other facilities.

4. THE ATHLETIC GROUP

Restrictive Action

1. The cooperation of captains, officials and members of teams may be secured by a group of citizens in the elimination of rough and unfair play and all use of professionals in amateur games.

2. The cooperation of spectators may be secured in

the elimination of discourtesies to visiting teams and similar forms of conduct.

3. City and state officials may be invoked to enforce the laws against gambling and prize-fighting. Public pressure may be brought to bear upon them as already suggested.

Constructive Action

1. Amateur athletics of all kinds under wise supervision may be organized among the young people of the community.

2. The full use of public parks and playing fields, gymnasiums and bathing beaches, and the like, may be fostered by making them easily accessible to all who would use them.

3. Enthusiasm for all forms of outdoor sports may be developed by volunteer or professional play leaders.

4. Cooperation may be offered in securing the highest grade men for officials at games.

5. SPECIAL AMUSEMENT PLACES

Restrictive Action

1. The cooperation of the owners and managers of amusement parks may be secured by fully acquainting them with existing evils. The restriction of evil practices may thus be secured.

2. An appeal may be made to city or county officials to enforce the law against those responsible for drunkenness, gambling and vice.

3. An appeal may be made to the city or district attorney to bring suit against the management and seek the closing of the enterprise.

Constructive Action

1. The larger provision and social use of public parks, playgrounds, and playing fields may be fostered.

2. The full support and commendation of the well-run commercial enterprise may add to its power in competition with loosely conducted resorts.

3. The utilization of sites of natural beauty may be made possible at public expense and their use made popular.

6. SPECIAL AMUSEMENT EVENTS

Restrictive Action

1. The cooperation of those promoting amusement events may be secured by a group of citizens and evil features obviated by careful provision made in advance.

2. The police and other city officials may be forewarned.

3. Detectives may be employed to secure evidence for later use in prosecutions.

Constructive Action

1. The community may be educated to a full appreciation of the field day, pageant, sane Fourth, and similar celebrations.

2. A group of citizens may undertake small celebrations and work up to the preparation of a festival pageant.

3. Leaders in country districts may attain large results by arranging a field day. An "Old Home Week" helps community spirit.

APPENDIX

1. THE DISCUSSION GROUP MEETING AND THE GROUP LEADER

Whatever the type of discussion group or class in which this study is used, the leader will be an important factor, as he will be responsible for conducting the meetings. No two leaders will conduct them in exactly the same way, for groups differ and meetings naturally vary. Sometimes the presentation of a topic takes the bulk of the hour. Sometimes a speaker from outside the group is introduced. Sometimes the entire hour is devoted to discussion. A general plan, however, is important and the following has been found to work in experience:

The leader assigns the different topics or sub-topics in order as shown in the outline to members of the group or to outside speakers. This should be done at least a month in advance of the presentation. He singles out for assignment the subjects for which particular members seem to care, and they will often volunteer. He takes a vote of the group or uses his own judgment as to the amount of time to be spent on each subject. The book should be in the hands of all members of the group. The member who prepares himself to speak upon a topic thus has at hand selected references upon his topic with annotations describing the material or commenting upon it. He is thus spared all unnecessary labor and needs

to spend only a few hours in preparation. The other members of the group are also able to prepare for the discussion easily, in accordance with their personal interests and in the time at their disposal.

The first meeting of the group is opened by the leader with a general statement of the problem, followed by an outline of the plan of procedure. After the first meeting he opens with a brief review, recalls impartially the points previously made, and leads up to the topic of the hour. The topic as prepared is then presented. Experience shows that the time should ordinarily be limited to about twenty-five or thirty minutes, and one topic given at each session. A half hour is thus reserved for discussion. In some cases briefer reports might be made, in other cases two meetings may be necessary for one topic. The discussion is usually more satisfactory if allowed the last half hour unbroken. The discussion is an extremely important part of each meeting and will be longest remembered. Speakers from the floor may well be limited to three or five minutes each and not allowed to speak a second time if anyone who has not spoken desires to speak. The person who presents the topic can stimulate the discussion by asking for questions and by taking a decided point of view upon the matter in hand. This point of view may be at variance with that of all the articles listed and with that of the author, as expressed in the general statement of each topic in this study. That will help to foster discussion.[1]

It naturally falls to the leader to summarize at the end of the hour the points made and to anticipate the next

[1] The author's purpose in revealing his own point of view on some subjects has been to stimulate discussion rather than to dogmatize, and he will be glad to receive by letter through Association Press, correction on matters of fact, additional information bearing on amusements or frank statements of difference of opinion.

topic. When proposed solutions are taken up, addresses by specialists or men of experience in public life are desirable. When the discussion is finished, the leader will add greatly to its permanent value if he is able to state in a brief and cogent summary the points brought out by the chief speaker and those participating from the floor. He himself should prepare at least one topic on each problem.

The success of the group lies largely in the hands of the leader. He is the moving force. A vital interest on his part in the social movement is indispensable, but he need be in no sense an authority. He is a leader, not a teacher, and seeks only to direct the open search for the facts and the best methods of solution. If he is able to suppress side issues without offense or delay and to focus attention upon fundamentals, he will secure coherence and progress in the meetings. The wider his reading and the closer his personal knowledge of the problem under discussion, the more pungent and concrete will be his comment. If he be a man of forethought he will anticipate the most likely points of discussion in each meeting, be prepared to raise them by well-aimed questions, and also to handle them. If he have the grace of tact and of fairness, he will be able to hold in pleasant relations in the same group persons of almost opposite views. There are in any town people who will engage in such a group either as speakers or working members upon a broad platform of free speech, mutual respect for differing opinions and an honest effort to get at the truth, who would not come together under any other circumstances. The leader will be surprised to find how many potential speakers there are in his own town and neighboring towns if he will persistently seek them out. So-

cial workers in the cities are usually willing to address such a group without remuneration above expenses of travel and entertainment.

2. A SUGGESTED ORDER FOR THE USE OF THIS STUDY BY DISCUSSION GROUPS

Note carefully that the method of the study, as planned, is to take up first the outstanding facts of public amusements, frankly studying the evils involved in order that they may be recognized as constituting a widespread, varied, and yet unified social problem. The large percentage of good in most of these forms of amusement is taken for granted throughout, and should not be forgotten. Aggravated phases receive especial attention because we are trying to get at *the problem* of popular amusements. We pass from the consideration of the problem to the solution of the problem, beginning with the need of public awakening. Public opinion as registered in restrictive action is next considered, and then constructive efforts to solve the problem. Definite suggestions for community action, both restrictive and constructive, are then given.

No rigid outline for the assignment of topics for discussion is made because of the varying degrees of thoroughness with which different groups will study and the varied number of discussions which they will devote to it. The briefest possible treatment of the whole subject in a discussion group would seem to be in sixteen meetings as follows: (Numerals below refer to topics listed in the Contents.)

First meeting, Chapter I; 2nd, Chapter II; 3rd, Chapter III; 4th, Chapter IV; 5th, Chapter V; 6th, Chapter

VI; 7th, Chapter VII; 8th, Chapter VIII, phases 1-3 inclusive; 9th, Chapter VIII, 4-6; 10th, Chapter IX, phase 1; 11th, Chapter IX, 2; 12th, Chapter IX, 3; 13th, Chapter IX, 4; 14th, Chapter IX, 5; 15th, Chapter IX, 6; 16th meeting, Chapter X.

Experience proves, however, that only a cursory view of the subject can be gained in this number of meetings, and a considerably longer time should be devoted if possible. Special attention can then be given to subjects which elicit the special interest of the group. It is possible, of course, to take up certain sections of the problem, omitting others.

An alternative method of study is available for those who desire to consider each phase of the problem before taking up another phase, as The Dramatic, under each of the four headings, as follows: 1. The Problem, 2. Restrictive Action, 3. Constructive Action, 4. Local Action. Those who use this method should develop their outline in accordance with the desires of their own group. Cross references will be found in the suggestions for group discussion under each topic to other pages where the same topic is treated. Still further material upon each topic will be found in "Christianity and Amusements."

The advantage of this method is to have the consideration of dramatic facts, for example, immediately followed by dramatic solutions. The corresponding disadvantage is a loss in that sense of the unity of the problem as a whole which is gained by the other method. Far more satisfactory results will be obtained by most groups, especially those doing thorough and comprehensive work, if the first method is followed.

3. FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR THE USE OF THIS STUDY

The use of this study is in no way confined to "Community Interest Groups."

1. Civic clubs, settlement clubs, social betterment leagues, women's clubs, social center clubs, men's clubs in churches, business men's associations, Christian Association classes, or similar groups may find it available as an outline for constructive study. It may be used as a guide for investigation of local conditions and the development of a community program of recreation.

2. A survey course of instruction upon American Social Problems, adaptable to institutions of higher learning, can be based upon the series of studies of which this book forms a part.

3. It may be used as a guide to systematic personal reading and investigation.

4. College and high school debaters will find special subjects for debate and specific references available upon different phases of each topic.

The full use of this study depends upon access to some, at least, of the books and periodicals listed. Any public library should be able to furnish a portion of the material desired. All members of discussion clubs using this study should frequent the public library and make their wants known to the librarian. An efficient librarian always welcomes the opportunity to be of use to such groups and to arrange the material in accessible form. A library board usually buys the books for which there is most demand. A simple and effective plan is for each member of the discussion club to buy a book or provide

magazine articles on the subject and thus establish a circulating library. All groups interested in the Christian contribution to the solution of this problem are referred to the author's companion volume, "Christianity and Amusements," Association Press, 1915, 50c. net.

4. QUESTIONS FOR DEBATERS

1. Resolved that the evils arising in connection with prevalent amusements in America are due more largely to commercial exploitation of the play spirit than to living and working conditions in our cities.

2. Resolved that dramatic censors should be appointed by the mayors of all cities and given police power to stop immoral shows.

3. Resolved that vaudeville has "done more to corrupt, vitiate and degrade public taste in matters relating to the stage than all other influences put together."

4. Resolved that motion pictures as now being shown in America have a highly educational and moral effect.

5. Resolved that burlesque shows as ordinarily put on in America are so demoralizing that they should be prohibited by law.

6. Resolved that endowed theaters are the greatest dramatic need in America today.

7. Resolved that the serious drama as now presented in America is an elevating moral influence.

8. Resolved that "there is no such thing *per se* as immoral subject matter for drama."

9. Resolved that football as now played in American colleges is physically dangerous, interferes with study, and ought to be abolished by faculty action.

10. Resolved that play is no less important than work.

11. Resolved that all social reforms can be carried out by constructive social work without the aid of direct efforts to suppress and stamp out evil.

12. Resolved that the wider use of school buildings is more important than all restrictive legislation in regard to amusements.

13. Resolved that there should be an official board of censorship of motion pictures created by the national government.

5. VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

It should be clearly recognized that those who actually conduct amusement enterprises with a high sense of their public duty and a scrupulous regard for the moral character of their enterprises may make a large contribution to the solution of the problem. There is also a large and increasing demand for well trained young men and women to take up the pursuit of such vocations as the following, all of which contribute directly to the improvement of recreational life. Many opportunities in other professions, such as settlement work teaching and the ministry, which contribute less directly to the solution of the problem, are already well known.

"Of the positions open, the first in importance is the recreation secretary, whose work involves the organization and direction of the entire recreation activities of a town or city. In relative importance, this position is similar to that of the superintendent of schools. It requires strong executive ability. Within the last year, eleven cities have engaged such a worker, and at the present time as many more have the matter under serious consideration. The salaries paid for this position at the present time range from $1,200 to $5,000. Other positions are those (1) of recreation supervisor—a worker who has charge of a number of playgrounds in the summer and if the position is an all-the-year one,

of recreation centers in the winter. The salaries being paid run from $1,000 to $2,000 per year. (2) Recreation director, or general manager of a single playground or recreation center, with assistants working under him: from $70 a month to $1,800 per year is being paid for one working in this capacity. (3) Play leader or recreation assistant having charge of play activities of children, teaching games, industrial classes, etc. Salaries range from $50 per month up to $1,000 per year."[1]

The directorship of physical training and recreation in a large number of schools and colleges is also open to qualified men and women.

Special opportunities for women include directors of physical education and athletics, teachers of dramatics, folk dancing, manual training and industrial work, story-tellers, and leaders in pageantry and other special activities. These comprise the third group.

Courses of instruction for vocations in recreation work are now being offered by more than fifty educational institutions throughout the country.

Further information regarding openings in recreation work may be secured by adressing the Playground and Recreation Association of America, 1 Madison Avenue, New York City.

[1] A special statement from the Playground and Recreation Association.

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